

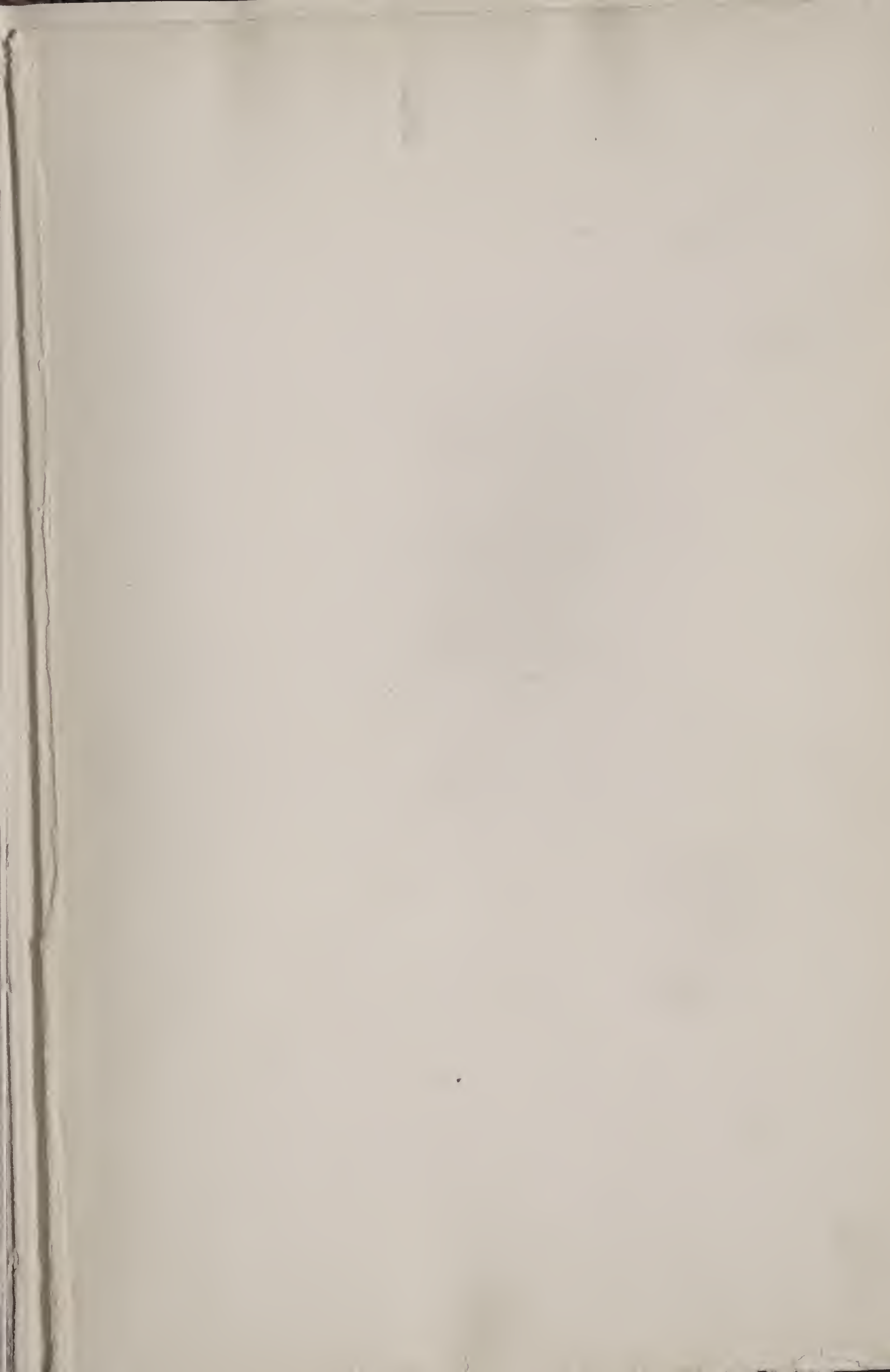


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Jewish Festivals in
The Religious School

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JEWISH FESTIVALS IN THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

A HANDBOOK FOR ENTERTAINMENTS

BY

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"THE NEW LAND," "PLAYMATES IN EGYPT," ETC., ETC.

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To
A Good Teacher
Dr. Joseph Stolz
this book for teachers is
gratefully dedicated.

PREFACE

This volume is intended to serve both as a guide to those who desire to give holiday entertainments and as a source book containing program material for the Jewish festivals. The instructions on staging, coaching, etc., are intended primarily for teachers and club leaders with no dramatic training. The material presented, much of it appearing for the first time in book form, should be welcome to both the amateur and professional dramatic teacher, as well as to club leaders desirous of giving Jewish entertainments of a more informal character.

In addition to explicit directions for preparing the program, I have given enough material to furnish three model programs for Succoth, Chanukah, Purim, Passover and Shabuoth, the programs for the last-named being suitable for Closing Day exercises of the Religious School as well. In arranging these programs I have been guided in my choice of material by pedagogical principles, believing that dramatics have a distinctly educational value in the curriculum of the Religious School. For this reason many charming plays and recitations without educational or distinctly Jewish value have been omitted.

It would be impossible to thank by name the many Religious School superintendents and teachers whose suggestions have aided me in writing this book; so I make mention only of Dr. S. Benderly, of New York City, who first worked out with me the principles which have guided me in this work, and my husband, who has aided both as censor and constructive critic.

ELMA EHRLICH LEVINGER.

Wilmington, Del., April, 1923.

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Part I

A HANDBOOK
FOR
ENTERTAINMENTS

INTRODUCTION

PREPARATION OF HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENTS IN THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

THE place of the holiday entertainment in the religious school is no longer a question of debate. Its purpose at first glance seems to be merely to amuse the pupils. But it is not enough for the holiday entertainment to be amusing. If so, why such excitement year after year, why such overworking of unenthusiastic teachers and coaching of children who often have to be bribed or bullied into attending rehearsals? Why not amuse the children in the easiest way possible—as not a few Sabbath Schools have done on Chanukah or Purim—by engaging professional performers, or by hiring a picture show for the afternoon? The children will be far more amused than by the feeble efforts of poorly-trained fellow pupils in a hastily prepared entertainment.

If, on the other hand, we wish to instruct the child as well as amuse him, our holiday entertainments must be planned with the double aim of amusement and instruction in view. Educators have long ago agreed that the dramatic method is one of the most effective means employed in pedagogy. The Exodus thrills the child with a strange awe when he beholds the persecuted ones of Egypt pausing to glorify God beside the Red Sea; the story of the long wandering in the Wilderness and the pastoral life of our fathers become far more vivid through tableaux and song;

Esther never really lives until the children actually see her pleading before the king. Succoth, Passover, Purim—the words glow with a new meaning when the child finds the dry bones of history vivified through the charm of the dramatist's art.

Thus the child learns certain historical facts; but this is not enough. The inspiration of the story of Jewish history may be increased tenfold if the child's emotional nature is stirred and is deepened. As the boy in Hawthorne's parable of "The Great Stone Face" grew like the vision he loved from his youth, so our children may become more heroic when, as Miriam and Judah and Esther, they embody the heroic ideals of our people.

But this twofold purpose of the entertainment, amusement and education, is not achieved without long and intensive labor. No Hebrew teacher would dream of leading his pupils to the prophetic books until they had mastered more than the rudiments of the language; no director of a children's choral society would venture to present a program without careful rehearsing. Neither the Hebrew teacher nor the choirmaster should dare to begin a year's work without a definite goal in view, whether it be a fluent translation from Isaiah or the execution of a difficult cantata. But the holiday entertainment is usually left to chance, often handed over to an overworked or inexperienced Sabbath School teacher a few weeks before the holiday occurs. A play is hastily chosen, indifferently coached and produced; one child prodigy is asked to dance; another allowed to sing the latest hit in vaudeville; a third recites the selection pre-

scribed for her by her elocution teacher, which usually turns out to be a bit of dialect or something as glaringly inappropriate as "The Night Before Christmas". These "extra numbers" are seldom rehearsed. At the performance, the play is literally pitched upon the boards and the extra performers present their religious minstrel show.

It is against such an outrage which occurs in far too many of our Religious Schools every year that the author, who for the last ten years has struggled for the cause of better entertainments for Jewish children, wishes to protest.

Perhaps the most necessary adjustment to be made in the present-day holiday entertainment, even when thoughtfully planned and executed, is along the lines of *Grading*. Every child in the Religious School from the five-year-old, impatient to see his first Purim play, to the blasé confirmand who wishes "they'd give something new for a change", should be considered in the celebration of the holiday. So important is the feature of the ideal entertainment that we have devoted pages 14-16 to explaining the meaning of the term and to suggestions for adapting the program to the needs of the various grades.

Alternation of holiday entertainments must also be considered. This is especially true in the smaller schools where the brunt of the work necessary for preparing a successful entertainment falls upon a few gifted children. Children who have worked hard to produce a Chanukah play should not be asked to rehearse for a Purim Pageant. Confirmants who the year before may have ample time to participate in a

Purim celebration should have no part in a Purim program when they are preparing for Confirmation. Even in a larger school, where different groups may be called upon to do their share for the different holidays, it is often unwise to plan too many elaborate entertainments for one year. At best, they involve a certain amount of nerve strain for both teachers and pupils; even more serious is the tendency of the pupils to think of their Sabbath School as a sort of theater. If, as has often been charged, the Jewish child is sometimes guilty of ostentation and love of the limelight, his Sabbath School at least should be clean of such tendencies.

For this reason, it seems best to give one large entertainment every year. One year it may be a mid-winter festival in honor of Chanukah; the next year a full-length program for Purim; the third year an outdoor pageant for Shabuoth. This does not mean that the other holidays are neglected. Shorter and simpler programs should be given and, like the more elaborate entertainments, should be planned with great care. The smallest entertainment, if it is worth doing, is worth doing well.

Since the task of preparing the entertainment often falls upon a teacher who, for all her knowledge of pedagogy and Jewish history, is hopelessly at sea when coaching a play for the first time, a few *Suggestions* for acting, choosing a cast and similar difficulties may not be unwelcome. As Purim is the most universally celebrated holiday in the Sabbath School, most of the examples will be drawn from that festival.

As the play is usually the nucleus of any enter-

tainment, the following very brief suggestions will deal chiefly with the dramatic aspects of the program, it being taken for granted that the music and the occasional dancing are in adequate hands. These two very important features should, whenever possible, be taken out of the province of the busy dramatic director; in nearly every Sabbath School one finds grade-school teachers capable of teaching these branches, and they should be held responsible for their share in the entertainment, after sufficient consultations and planning with the producer of the play.

The selection of the play is a matter of very great importance. Unfortunately the field has been but little developed and the material suitable for presentation by Jewish children is painfully small. However, the dramatic director should make certain that the play he has chosen is the very best play available for his purpose, that it best expresses the phase he desires to bring out in the holiday celebration (say the ceremonial aspects of Purim or the historical side of Passover), and is neither too long nor too difficult for his pupils to present. In this case, it is often a simple matter to omit several scenes or even a whole act, provided the director has sufficient skill to write in several speeches to cover the omitted action. In any case, long speeches can be simplified or scenes "built up" by the introduction of tableau effects or appropriate musical selections.

The play once chosen, the director selects his cast. If the Sabbath School boasts a Dramatic Club, the task is an easy one. If the players are to be chosen from the school at large, it has been found most prac-

tical to ask the children from the grades that are to furnish the entertainment to meet after one of the regular sessions of Sabbath School to discuss the coming play. If the school is large, the director is likely to face a veritable mob of stage aspirants. Many are eliminated by the simple process of stating the days for rehearsal, which will often conflict with music lessons and other home duties. With younger children, it is often best to secure the parents' consent, especially if they live at any great distance from the place of rehearsals. The director should also exercise discretion in assigning parts to pupils who are notoriously unruly, tardy or unreliable; one reads pretty stories of bad boys being reformed through amateur dramatics; but the director cannot always afford to risk demoralizing her company for the sake of one or two incorrigibles.

After this weeding out process, the cast and the director meet to read the play together. This means a copy for every speaking character in the play. It is disgraceful economy to seek to save fifteen cents or even a quarter by placing a mutilated copy of the play in the children's hands, to say nothing of the stupid device of asking a busy director to copy the separate parts. The child should read the play as a whole, not only to get his complete cues, but to acquire the proper spirit and atmosphere. In many cases, the children will buy their own copies; if not, the congregation should consider it a legitimate expense.

The play is now read as a whole, the director calling upon first one child to read a certain part, now another. Of course, he has distinct types in mind, and

has no one read Esther but girls of the right age and stage presence. In this way he tests their voices—notes their feeling for the lines. He learns that a boy who has been called upon to read Mordecai has an imperfection in speech and decides he cannot include him in the cast; the next Mordecai has a fine, clear voice, and has such dignity that he mentally puts him aside for Ahasuerus. When Esther is chosen, he picks her closest rival for Vashti, the third choice receiving the smaller part of the handmaid. And he must be very careful to avoid the “star system”. The boy who made a splendid Judah on Chanukah should receive a minor part on Purim; it is better to give the Hannah of the last performance the part of a court lady, even if she does make an ideal Esther, rather than run the risk of turning an unaffected child into a spoiled and petted leading lady. The new Esther may be a little harder to coach, but every director will agree that nothing is more undesirable than exploiting a talented child.

The cast chosen with due attention to voice and type—don’t ask a timid little lad to defy Haman, or a boy with an angelic smile to play that villain!—set the dates for rehearsals, and stick to them. The modern child is so overburdened with music lessons, dancing school and home work that rehearsals often rob him of his only free afternoons. If he is strong enough to stand the extra strain, and interested enough to make the sacrifice, well and good. Otherwise he should be dropped for the second unexcused absence from rehearsal. One example is usually enough to impress the rest of the cast.

Discipline is a negligible quality at rehearsals if the children are interested and the director knows his business. The director who comes to rehearsals knowing as little about the play as the children; who keeps his eyes glued to his copy instead of handing it over to an older pupil as "prompter", cannot expect the same response as the coach who keeps things moving throughout the rehearsal, filling even the dullest actor with "pep" and persuading the most conceited child that he alone is master of the situation. Rehearsals should not be too long; if possible, they should be given on the stage where the final performance takes place. If this is out of the question, try to arrange your temporary stage with exits exactly like those for the real performance; it is often wise to mark imaginary exits with chairs. Begin to use properties as early as possible and have at least one dress rehearsal. At the end of this rehearsal all the properties should be placed in a convenient spot in the order in which they are to be used during the performance. The appointment of a reliable, older pupil to hand these out on the day of the play's presentation will avoid much confusion and unnecessary delay. In this connection, it is well to remind the producer that nothing is so fatal to a successful performance as tiresome "waits" between the acts. These may in many cases be eliminated by a judicious arrangement of the program, since recitations and essays and group songs may be given before the curtains while the stage is being prepared for the next act.

One word should suffice for the acting. Don't allow acting! Fill your players with the spirit of the

play and they will be themselves. Avoid stage attitudes and exaggerated gestures, except in pantomime or pageant.

It is also worth remembering that tableaux and recitations as well as the play should be carefully coached. An excellent pamphlet on the presentation of Biblical tableaux has been prepared by Samuel S. Grossman and may be purchased from Young Judea. The child with a recitation should have at least one rehearsal on the stage to be used for the final performance, a listener in the rear of the auditorium halting the recitation whenever the speaker's voice fails to carry. His gestures, already planned by the coach, should be carefully rehearsed. Above all, the director should be sure that the performer has a clear idea of what his recitation means. To illustrate, with the recitation, "Esther before the King", given below:

See that the reciter knows the story—why Esther went to the king—her danger. What is the meaning of the name Esther? Why is she called the Myrtle in the poem? Just what does the Bible tell us she said when she set out to plead with the king? Why have the centuries since the first Purim often proved "weary" to the Jew? Let your voice at the end ring out with the proud assurance that Esther has indeed saved her people.

Forbid make-up in natural light, and when artificial lighting is used be as sparing as possible with rouge and the lip-stick. These articles, perfectly proper on the professional stage, are glaringly out of place in the Sabbath School. In many cases hair may be powdered, as wigs are usually heavy and cumbersome.

Beards should be used as little as possible, as they generally tend to make the young player nervous. When used, the most desirable are the crepe paper variety.

Except for the elaborate productions, it is best not to rent the costumes. The children should be given typewritten directions for their costumes describing the cut, color and material to be employed. But in these days of mothers often too busy to do extra work for the Sabbath School or too inexperienced with the needle to attempt even simple sewing, the best plan is to have the costumes made for the children, charging those who can afford to pay for the material. A seamstress can be hired by the day, and with a little supervision can turn out an amazingly large portion of the simple robes in a few hours. Better yet, the director or the wardrobe mistress whom he appoints, can meet with the members of the local Sisterhood or the mothers themselves, cut out and design the costumes, which the women can make in a day, not only saving money but experiencing what for some of them may be a novel treat—working for the Sabbath School. In some cases, these costumes can be made by the older girls of the post-confirmation classes or turned over to the senior members of the dramatic club.

Should the costume plates prepared especially for this volume not suffice, any good illustrated Bible will be found rich in suggestions for costumes of any of the plays laid in Biblical times. The Tissot pictures, issued by Perry Co., Boston, Mass., are excellent. Modern pictures of the inhabitants of Palestine are also helpful, and Maxfield Parrish's

studies from the Arabian Nights are especially fine for color suggestions. The Jewish Encyclopedia and Oppenheim's pictures are useful in costuming plays of a later date. Cheese cloth and the various lining goods are excellent, and little trimming is needed except what the children themselves supply—a string of beads, a colored cord or waist cloth, a bright scarf or a diadem made of pasteboard and gold paper. Only don't expect the children to think of these additions for themselves. The costumer should discuss these details with each member of the cast, planning the arrangement of the hair for the girls and insisting that every member of the company wear white stockings and sandals. These may be replaced by slippers or gymnasium "sneakers" or made from inner soles, laced with ribbon; but the wardrobe mistress should not allow a stage picture to be marred by heavy, neatly-blackened shoes extending beneath a priest's classic white robes, or a messenger appearing in pink slippers with French heels.

Nearly all properties can be made or borrowed. It is far better to borrow a hanging lamp from a friend's cozy corner than use some of the atrocities which the professional costumer keeps on hand. Dishes for a banquet may be kitchenware covered with gold paper; the king's goblet is a glass of graceful design similarly disguised. Boys in manual training classes can turn out spears and swords which the girls in the play can cover with silver paper when they make the crowns and cover the king's scepter. Bits of bright paper placed on them in conventional designs make good oriental jewelry. It is very easy to interest the

lower classes in this handwork, and many of the children are willing to meet for several afternoons in order to do their share of work for the play.

Be careful in the choice of furniture, especially for Biblical plays. Do not use stiff class-room chairs for a palace scene; an old kitchen chair properly draped gives the right regal effect. A couch or arm-chair likewise disguised serves as a throne. A brass urn filled with red roses, a crimson curtain thrown across a carved chair, and a lion skin which the author borrowed from one of the pupils, actually suggested a royal apartment; on the other hand, a Zionist banner allowed to remain draped across the wall because "there wasn't time to take it down", was an irritating flaw in a playlet dealing with the life of Moses Mendelssohn. "Take care of your scenery and details", says Constance Mackay, "and much of your play will take care of itself."

Every public library contains reference books which will be of value to the dramatic coach. The following have proved most useful to the author, both for inspiration and directly practical suggestions:

REFERENCE BOOKS

THE CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL THEATRE.—Alice Minnie Herts. *Harper & Bros.*

SHORTER BIBLE PLAYS.—Rita Benson. *Abingdon Press.*

COSTUMES AND SCENERY FOR AMATEURS.—Constance D'arcy Mackay. *Henry Holt & Co.*

PAGEANTS AND PAGEANTRY.—Bates & Orr. *Ginn & Co.*

FESTIVALS AND PLAYS.—Percival Chubb. *Harper & Bros.*

THE DRAMATIZATION OF BIBLE STORIES.—Elizabeth E. Miller. *The School of Education, University of Chicago.*

The last work will be found especially helpful for suggestions in costuming and hints for incidental music, while the Mackay book is unusually fine for the coach who has to labor against such difficulties as a small stage and no scenery. For excellent suggestions for American and Jewish Festivals, the Holiday Envelopes issued by Young Judea, as well as the pamphlets issued by the Jewish Welfare Board (N. Y. C.) and the Jewish Festival Books of the Bureau of Jewish Education (N. Y. C.) are most useful.

The Special Character of the Entertainment should depend largely upon the age of the pupil. It is enough, to take one example, if the very young child learns to enjoy Purim; if he learns a few facts concerning the identity of Esther and Mordecai, so much the better. As the child advances in the Sabbath School, he not only acquires more facts with the recurrence of the holiday each year, but should be taught to draw more inspiration from the historical material. To the child of five, Esther is little more than the Cinderella heroine of a Jewish fairy tale; the child of ten can be made to feel something of God's care for His people; the adolescent is fired to emulate the heroism of Mordecai and Esther in a modern Jewish crisis.

For this reason, *grading* is as necessary in the entertainment department as in any other phase of the religious curriculum. The pupil in the primary department should not be expected to listen while his teacher draws from the Purim story an inspirational lesson which only an adolescent could grasp; the boy in the Confirmation Class should not be bored by the bare recital of the facts which he has heard without

alteration for the last seven weary Purims. If he has been well taught it should be taken for granted that by the time he reaches the third or fourth grade he knows the story as well as he should know the story of the First Thanksgiving. Then let the teacher spend a little time in telling him how Purim was spent in later days, striving to give him a feeling for the ceremonialism usually so lacking in his own home. If a few of these customs can be revived, say, the good old habit of *Shalach Monoth*, the holiday will cease to be an outworn shell, but will become a living reality. While to the higher grades, the life lessons of Esther and Mordecai may be made to serve as stepping-stones to the study of the Jewish heroes and heroines of our own day.

It has been found best to divide the children into three divisions: The *Primary Division* (5-7), the *Intermediate* (8-10), the *Senior* (11-14)—at least in the large graded school. In the small school it may be found necessary to use the two terms, *Junior Division* (5-9) and *Senior* (10-14). Dramatic Clubs will naturally fall under the head of *Intermediate* or *Senior*, depending upon the ages of the members.

It is with these divisions in mind that the author has planned both the supplementary work in the classroom and the model programs. The latter, especially, should be arranged to include representatives from every division, that the younger children may also take an active part and learn through participation.

✕ SUCCOTH

SUCCOTH IN THE CLASS-ROOM

SINCE the late opening of many of our Religious Schools often means that Succoth will be the first of the holidays celebrated, the teacher should spend a little time in introducing the idea of the Jewish festivals before beginning the story in the class-room. With the primary children she should emphasize the fact that Jewish children have a number of holidays of their own, as well as those enjoyed by all American children; Succoth as well as Thanksgiving, Rosh Hashanah as well as the civil New Year. She should also explain why the little ones just beginning to attend public school should come to Sabbath School instead on Succoth, and that this custom is to be continued through the year. Above all, she must give the little ones a thrill of anticipation. Succoth is a very happy festival, the teacher tells them, and through the year Jewish children enjoy many more which they will learn about in turn.

Now comes the center of all class-room work—the story. For the primary child the Succoth story should be little more than a study in gratitude, and should run something like this: We are grateful to our parents for food and clothing, but these things come from God. We thank our parents when they give us presents, and try to show how thankful we are by obeying them and pleasing them in every way. When we talk to God it is called praying, and some prayers are said just to thank Him for His goodness.

This is usually a good time to introduce one of the simpler forms of "Grace at Meals". The two translations given below are taken from Jessie E. Sampter's little volume, "Around the Year in Rhymes" (Bloch), a collection of charming verses which should be in the hands of every teacher of young children. In some cases the Hebrew form may be learned at once; for some children, especially the very little ones, it is often wisest to give the English equivalent later, teaching the Hebrew as one of the first lessons in the language.

BLESSING ON BREAKING BREAD

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God,
King of the World, who from the clod
Makest our daily bread to grow.
Not only we His blessings know,
But all the ripening summer days
The wheat and barley sing His praise.

The other selection, more difficult, and therefore more suitable for older children who have had more Hebrew instruction, follows:

Blessed art Thou, O God our King,
The Lord of every time and place,
Who feedest every living thing
With goodness, kindness, love and grace.
He gives their bread to all that live
Because His kindness lasts forever;
Our food He gave us, and will give
With goodness, and shall fail us never;
He nourishes both great and small,
Sustains and cares for every soul,
For His great name's sake keeps us all.
Blessed be God, who feeds the whole.

Remind the children we thank God not only in our prayers, but in trying to please Him. So at Succoth we follow the old Jewish custom of sharing our blessings. We are not farmers, and cannot give grain and fruit from our own fields, but we can buy and bring fruit to the Temple to make the altar beautiful, and afterwards send it to poor children whose parents cannot give them all the good things we enjoy.

Having developed the two themes of the holiday, gratitude and charity, which are comprehensible to the young child, sketch a little of the historical background and origin of the Festival, being careful that the child is given no more than he can easily digest. The story in its simplest form should run something like this:

Before the Jewish people entered Palestine, they roamed about the desert for many years, just as the Indians used to do in this country. You have all seen pictures of an Indian house or tent (it may be well to sketch one rapidly on the board), and while the Jewish people lived in the desert they also dwelt in rough little houses that were something like these tents. We will build some of our own in a few minutes, that we can see just how the Jewish people lived.

After many hard years God led them into Palestine. Here the Jewish people built themselves comfortable houses and a beautiful Temple. It was a good land for farming, and many of the people planted grain and fruit and had a bountiful harvest every year. They tried to remember how often they had been hungry in the desert, and they always gave liberally from their harvests to the poor people and

little children who had no fathers to care for them. And they formed great processions, and from every part of Palestine went up to Jerusalem, their greatest city. Some people carried fruit to lay on the altar of the Temple, and some carried grain. And when they came to their beautiful white Temple they waved willow branches and palms. (If possible, show the children the traditional offering of Succoth, the ethrog and lulab.) They sang and made merry and thanked God for giving them a bountiful harvest. And because they never forgot how they had lived in rough little booths through all those desert years they built little houses of boughs and lived in them for the whole holiday of Succoth, which lasted eight days.

The teacher should seek also to review the fall holydays with the pupils of the Intermediate Division. Contrast the solemnity of Yom Kippur with the brightness of Succoth; point out how often the spirit of the joy which characterizes so many of the Jewish holidays was the only real joy the Jew knew in days of exile and persecution. No wonder he never wearied of his festivals, but greeted them eagerly, sometimes beginning as soon as Yom Kippur was over to build his Succah, that he would surely be ready for the festival; and after the days of rejoicing in the harvest he added still another day of joy, the day for the Rejoicing in the Law, Simchath Torah.

In telling the Succoth story to the Intermediates, compare it to its American descendant, Thanksgiving. Spend a moment on the influence of the Old Testament upon Puritan thought and life, showing how this Puritan ideal for righteousness and religious freedom,

which is so essentially Jewish, has affected American ideals. Now draw a rapid picture of the desert life in huts, which should be already familiar to the children. Then it will be easy to show what features of the ancient festival survive, the eating in the Succah, the giving of thank-offerings. In this connection do not fail to show Oppenheim's well-known picture; the children may also enjoy hearing Zangwill's "Tabernacle Thoughts". They will certainly be interested in hearing of Succahs built at great difficulty and peril; there is something thrilling in the thought of the Spanish Jews of the days of the Inquisition and the Jews of the Poland of our own day risking fresh persecution by boldly building their Succahs at peril of their lives.

In this connection, the child is certain to ask why more Jews do not build their own Succahs today. It can be pointed out that because of cramped living conditions in our larger cities, it is often impossible to find room to build a Succah, and for this reason many Jews now celebrate Succoth in their common religious home, the Temple, building a Succah for all who wish to share it, and meeting to thank God for His harvest.

For the Senior Division the teacher should try to find a little time to dwell on the ceremonial aspects of the two holidays preceding Succoth, such as the symbolism of the Shofar, the Dance in the Vineyards on Yom Kippur. She should place special emphasis in her lesson talk on the three great pilgrim festivals of the ancient Jew—Succoth, Passover and Shabuoth—explaining how, in a day when there were no railroads and telegraph connections, such gatherings would

have a unifying effect upon the scattered tribes. And, if time permits, she can also mention and compare the pilgrimage of the Moslem to Mecca, the journeys of the Crusaders of the Middle Ages and the orthodox Russian peasants to Jerusalem.

It might be well to spend another moment on the natural aspects of the holiday, mentioning the great harvest festivals of all people, from the primitive Indians (here the teacher may read extracts from "Hiawatha") to their descendants, the American farmer, so beautifully described in Whittier's folk poem of "The Huskers". Comment on the irony of the Jewish people, who have been landless for so many years, still celebrating their own harvest festival. But add that the cruel laws of the Middle Ages, which forbade the Jew to engage in agriculture, have gradually disappeared in all civilized countries, telling how today we have flourishing agricultural colonies in Palestine, while in this country Jewish boys are taught scientific farming at the National Farm School, at Doylestown, Pa., and are encouraged to work on the soil.

Above all, do not fail to mention the twofold aspect of the holiday, the Jew's gratitude for the fruits of the earth, his gratitude for his Torah on Simchath Torah. Quote the poem "Simchath Torah", on page 49, and tell the old legend which accounts for the custom of beginning to re-read the Torah on the very day the last chapter is finished. Then, in conclusion, briefly draw your ethical inference from the survival of the Jewish holidays, describing them as one of the great unifying bonds of scattered Israel and pleading for their observance.

So much for the story proper. There will be little chance for class-room dramatization for the Primaries unless the children already know the story of the Wandering in the Wilderness. If they have the background, the children might enjoy presenting impromptu dramatizations of such stories as the author's "In the Tents of Israel" (from "Playmates in Egypt"). At least they will take pleasure in working out any simple pantomimic games the teacher cares to devise, such as "The Return of the Spies", "Gathering the Harvest" or "The First Succoth". It is always a good thing to dramatize any of the familiar harvest songs; these may be given later as part of the formal Succoth program.

The objects referred to in the story may be colored and cut out, sewn on cards with colored wool or constructed during the period devoted to handwork by the primary children. Should the primary teacher be fortunate enough to have a sand-table as part of her equipment, the children would dearly love to place their paper booths in their sandy wilderness, with trees, constructed of twigs and green paper, to represent the fertile Promised Land in the distance, and tiny dolls as the wandering Children of Israel. Or a modern farm scene (with the help of a toy village) may be constructed, showing a harvest field of today.

The office of the Department of Synagogue and School Extension has already issued excellent leaflets designed for the use of children in the kindergarten grades of the Religious School. These, of course, will be too simple to be given out as handwork for the children of the higher grades. The children of the

Intermediate and Senior Divisions should begin their holiday scrap-books on Succoth, the books of the former being little more than a collection of pictures appropriate to each holiday, accompanied by verses or prose selections suggested by the teacher. The Seniors should plan a more ambitious pamphlet, and should be encouraged to search out the best possible material for each holiday, a poem for Succoth, a story for Chanukah, an article on Purim customs, etc., copied from the few available volumes devoted to holiday material or current Jewish periodicals. This book should contain the pupil's own class-room compositions or stories for the holiday, and he should be guided in the selection of appropriate decorations for each section, a border of palms for Succoth, etc., which, if he is skillful with his pencil, he may be able to draw himself. Usually these stories and poems will prove sincere, but crude in their workmanship, although sometimes a bit of verse will have the authentic ring, such as the Chanukah stanzas written by a nine-year-old child, and printed in the appendix of this volume. At the end of the year a prize may be given for the best scrap-book in each division; in any case the scrap-book will be found to be one of the best methods, not only for awakening and holding a child's interest, but also for helping him retain the various supplementary lessons of the year's work.

If time permits, the teacher should tell a few legends or stories appropriate to the holiday, adapting them in every case to the ages of her listeners. Practically all the stories given below will do admirably for supplementary reading by the children themselves.

The references below should be used only for older children, and will be most useful in giving the teacher the necessary background for the story, whether or not she uses the actual material in her treatment of the holiday in question.

STORIES ABOUT SUCCOTH

REFERENCES FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

Modern

"MAY'S GARDEN" from "*A Modern Esther*"—Emily Goldsmith Gerson (Greenstone).

"SAM'S AND MIRIAM'S SUCCAH"—Ibid.

"FEAST OF TABERNACLES" from "*Festival Stories*"—Hannah Trager (Dutton).

"SIMCHATH TORAH" or "*Rejoicing in the Law*".—Ibid.

"THE COWARD" from "*Jewish Holyday Stories*"—Elma Ehrlich Levinger (Bloch).

Biblical

"IN THE TENTS OF ISRAEL" from "*Playmates in Egypt*"—Elma Ehrlich Levinger (Jew. Pub. Soc.).

REFERENCES FOR SENIOR PUPILS

Modern

"BEFORE DAWN" from "*Under the Sabbath Lamp*"—Abram Isaacs (Jew. Pub. Soc.).

"THE TABERNACLE" from "*Jewish Children*"—Sholom Aleichem (trans. Knopf).

"HIS OWN SUCCAH" from "*Jewish Holyday Stories*"—Elma Ehrlich Levinger (Bloch).

"LATE" from "*Yiddish Tales*" (translated by Helena Frank)—Abraham Raisin (Jew. Pub. Soc.).

"THE TENT OF REFUGE" from "*In Many Lands*"—Elma Ehrlich Levinger (Bloch).

"THE FLAG OF MY PEOPLE" from "*In Many Lands*"—Elma Ehrlich Levinger (Bloch).

REFERENCES FOR HIGHEST GRADES AND TEACHERS

BIBLE: Ex. 23:14-17; Num. 29:12-40; Deut. 16:13-16; Chron. II, 5:2-14; Psalms: 19, 65, 95, 96, 147.

JEWISH ENCYCLOPEDIA: *Succoth* and related articles.

"FESTIVAL STUDIES"—Israel Abrahams (Greenstone):

"The Succah of the Bible".

"Some Succahs I Have Known".

THE STORY OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE—Jack M. Myers (Bloch).

"The Drawing of the Water" (Chapter VIII).

HISTORY OF THE JEWS—Graetz (Jew. Pub. Soc.).

Vol. I, 379-380; Vol. II, 51; Vol. IV, 429-430.

SUCCOTH MANUAL prepared by Rabbi David Philipson (Bloch).

UNION HYMNAL.

"IN MANY LANDS"—Elma Ehrlich Levinger (Bloch).

"Succoth—the Jewish Thanksgiving."

THE SUCCOTH PROGRAM

For several reasons, the Succoth program should be the first holiday festival of the year presented in Religious Schools. Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur fall too soon after the opening of the Religious School to permit ample preparation. Besides, these two holidays are of the type which is well-nigh impossible to present to the child through the medium of an entertainment. For this reason it has been found best to limit the child's participation in these two holy days to such simplified services as those prepared by Mrs. Caesar Misch and Rabbi Louis Grossmann.

If Succoth falls early in the year, before the work of the school is well organized, it may be necessary to limit the children's celebration to a short program of appropriate recitations and songs, an essay on the holiday, or, better yet, one of the excellent Succoth services already listed. But by all means give the children their share in the program. There is so much that is picturesque and ennobling in the Succoth festival that the child must make the holiday his own as truly as he has appropriated Chanukah and Purim. And to do this he must learn by doing, whether he presents the ancient pilgrimage of his people in elaborate pageant form or by a simple harvest service repeats Israel's eternal lesson of reverence and gratitude.

No matter of what the program consists, it must not be too long. The grown-ups in the audience as well as the children themselves are quickly bored, and when boredom enters the door education as well as edification fly out of the window. The chairman who announces the numbers should keep his remarks brief and pertinent; if the rabbi tells the meaning of the festival, there is no need to have the facts repeated in an essay by a member of the Confirmation Class. If the director plans for two harvest songs by the entire school, there is no excuse for adding a solo by a member of the choir, merely because she has a charming voice and expects to be called upon; save her until Chanukah, and for your extra musical number introduce a simple harvest dance which several of the primary pupils may have already learned in public school. It will be more in character, beside giving the program the quality most frequently lacking in every Sabbath School entertainment—variety.

In the two model programs that follow, it will be seen that an attempt has been made to grade the material. The first program is almost entirely in the hands of the pupils of the Primary and Intermediate Divisions, for this program seeks to bring out the aspects of the festival most appealing to the children of these grades—Succoth as an ancient festival of thanksgiving, and its modern ceremonial celebration.

The second program is given over largely to the pupils of the Senior Division; in this the historical and ethical phases of the holiday are emphasized, and, since the operetta requires greater proficiency in acting and singing, it should be in the hands of the older

children, although the younger ones may fill minor roles.

For the third program, nothing could be more appropriate than the Harvest Service prepared by Dr. David Philipson (Bloch). It should be participated in by every member of the school, the more difficult passages being read by members of the Confirmation Class or the school's post-confirmands.

Not only the original material mentioned in the model programs is included here, but recitations by other writers are added in case the director wishes to substitute them for those already suggested. But in no case should they be added, as this cannot be done without dragging the program to an inartistic and tiresome length. The plays listed may be substituted for the play in Program I or the little opera in Program II. Where substitutes are offered, they must be selected with the greatest care to harmonize with the program's central theme.

If the program is printed or announced in the Temple Bulletin, one of the following quotations may be used, with designs suggestive of the harvest season:

They overflow with prayer and praise
To Him, who knows the future days.
Have mercy Thou, and hear the prayer
Of those who palms and myrtles bear.

—*Eleazar Kalir.*

For garnered fields and meadows cropped
And orchards plucked of peach and pear—
Lord, what Thy hand has given us,
For this we bring our grateful prayer.

—*Joseph Leiser.*

"Take unto you the boughs of goodly trees,
Branches of palm, and willows of the brook,
And build you booths to dwell therein with these."
So it was written in the Sacred Book.

—*Alice Lucas.*

PLAYS FOR SUCCOTH

INTERMEDIATE DIVISION.....*Modern*

"How Succoth Came to Chayim". Elma Ehrlich Levinger.

Published with this volume, for which may be substituted:

"Who Built the Succah", six boys, four girls; easy to present; a bright farce of today. Samuel S. Grossman.
Published by Young Judea, N. Y. C.

SENIOR DIVISION.....*Modern*

"The Ancient Fortress", four boys, 1 girl; highly dramatic scene laid in a Russian Succah during the past war.
Rufus Lears. Published by Young Judea, N. Y. C.

INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR DIVISIONS.....*Historical*

"The Golden Staff". Words by Elma Ehrlich Levinger; music by Samuel Goldfarb. Published with this volume.

MODEL PROGRAM FOR SUCCOTH

I

1. Entrance March of Children with Offerings.
Song, "EN KELOHENU", Union Hymnal, 248,
Entire School or Class
2. Service VII from Union Hymnal,
Read by Seniors or Post Confirmands
3. THE STORY OF THE SUCCAH... ..*Intermediate Division*
(*The others bring up their offerings*)
4. Recitation, PSALM 65 (10-16)*Intermediate Pupil*
5. Harvest Dance.....*Primary Pupils*
6. Essay, "WHY WE CELEBRATE SUCCOTH",
Primary or Intermediate Pupil
7. Song, "LET US SING UNTO THE LORD", Union
Hymnal, 11.....*Entire School*
8. Playlet, "HOW SUCCOTH CAME TO CHAYIM".*Intermediates*
9. Closing Song, "AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL", Union
Hymnal, 222.....*Entire School*

VARIATIONS

If the play is given, No. 2 may be omitted or shortened.

No. 3 may be omitted if a shorter program is desired; or there may be substituted a short talk on the symbolism of the Succah by the Rabbi or one of the teachers, followed by "Old Succah" (page 38).

For No. 4 may be substituted the recitation, "We Thank Thee" (page 41), for a primary pupil.

For No. 6 may be substituted either of the recitations, "A Succoth Hymn" (page 42), or "The Corn Song" (page 43).

THE BUILDING OF THE SUCCAH

[If the Succah is already built the four children take their places at the four corners, stepping a little to the front when reciting their portion. Or they may enter, carrying the four poles united by a roof of green decorated with fruit. If desired, different recitations may be substituted for those indicated below; or, after each recitation an appropriate Succoth song may be sung by the children in the audience.]

First Child: WHY WE BUILD THE SUCCAH: And the Lord spoke unto Moses saying: "Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the Lord....And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days. And ye shall dwell in booths seven days: that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of Egypt."

(If desired, several stanzas of "Palms and Myrtles", page 39, may be recited here.)

Second Child: GOD'S PROTECTION OF ISRAEL: This is to remind us that while our forefathers wandered in the wilderness they dwelt in frail booths beneath the open sky. And the little hut we raise today teaches us that even as God cared for Israel in the wilderness, and brought him to the Promised Land in safety, so will He care for Israel today and deliver him from those who persecute him; for some day all mankind will bow before Israel's God and the wandering people will be at peace.

(Here may be recited several stanzas of "All the World Shall Come to Serve Thee", page 40.)

Third Child: GOD'S PROTECTION OF HIS CHILDREN: And the Succah stands for God's protection not only of Israel as a people, but of all His creatures whom He would protect as a loving shepherd watches his sheep.

(This child should recite either the Twenty-third Psalm or "The Lord Is My Shepherd", page 41.)

Fourth Child: THE MEANING OF THE SUCCAH TODAY: To-day the Succah must mean not only God's protecting love for Israel and all His creatures, but it must also signify our love and our charity for our neighbors. As the tent of Abraham stood open on all four sides that strangers might come to him from the four corners of the earth and find a welcome beneath his roof, so must our hearts open their doors to those whose harvests have not been as rich as ours. We who have plenty must make our home an open tent to those who are homeless; we whose hands are full of blessings must share with those whose hands are empty. And in this spirit we bring our offerings of fruit to share them with those who otherwise would not know the joy of the harvest season.

(The other children of the school bring up their offerings of fruits; if this feature is omitted, the exercise may close with a song by the entire group.)

—Elma Ehrlich Levinger.

THE OLD SUCCAH

Long ago, when Succoth came,
 We knew just how to build our tent!
 Great creepers from the garden wall
 Towards the opposite fence we bent
 To make a fluttering roof of green,
 Where glittered rain or sun-drops bright;
 We tied sweet apples and full grapes
 To the red stems, so strong and light;
 The garden fence, the garden wall,
 And two more walls of rough white wood;
 And here we sang the Yom-tov songs
 And ate the golden Yom-tov food.
 And here the baby'd beg for grapes,
 His small hands and his big blue eyes,
 Beneath a crowd of ruffled curls,
 All reaching up to those green skies
 Where in the leaves the sweet fruit hung;
 And mother'd cut a small bunch down
 And feed them to him, one by one,
 The other children at her gown.
 There's no room here for such a tent,
 But when the days of Succoth come
 I simply shut my eyes, and go
 Once more to our old garden home.

—*Sulamith Ish-Kishor.*

PALMS AND MYRTLES

[Hymn for the First Day of Tabernacles]

Thy praise, O Lord, will I proclaim
In hymns unto Thy glorious name;
O Thou Redeemer, Lord and King,
Redemption to Thy faithful bring!
Before Thine altar they rejoice,
 With branch of palm and myrtle-stem
To Thee they raise the prayerful voice—
 Have mercy, save and prosper them.

May'st Thou in mercy manifold
Dear unto Thee Thy people hold,
When at Thy gate they bend the knee
And worship and acknowledge Thee,
Do Thou their hearts' desire fulfil;
 Rejoice with them in love this day,
Forgive their sins, and thoughts of ill,
 And their transgressions cast away.

They overflow with prayer and praise
To Him, who knows the future days.
Have mercy, Thou, and hear the prayer
Of those who palms and myrtles bear.
Thee day and night they sanctify
 And in perpetual song adore;
Like the heavenly host, they cry:
 "Blessed art Thou for evermore."

—*Eleazar Kalir.*

[Translated by *Alice Lucas.*]

In the "JEWISH YEAR" (MacMillan & Co.).

ALL THE WORLD SHALL COME TO SERVE THEE

All the world shall come to serve Thee
And bless Thy 'glorious name,
And Thy righteousness triumphant
The islands shall acclaim;
And the peoples shall go seeking
Who knew Thee not before,
And the ends of earth shall praise Thee,
And tell Thy greatness o'er.

They shall build for Thee their altars,
Their idols overthrown,
And their graven gods shall shame them
As they turn to Thee alone.
They shall worship Thee at sunrise,
And feel Thy kingdom's might,
And impart their understanding
To those astray in night.

They shall testify Thy greatness,
And of Thy power speak,
And extol Thee, shrined, uplifted
Beyond man's highest peak.
And with reverential homage,
Of love and wonder born,
With the Ruler's crown of beauty
Thy head they shall adorn.

With the coming of Thy kingdom
The hills shall break into song,
And the islands laugh exultant
That they to God belong.
And all their congregations
So loud Thy praise shall sing,
That the uttermost peoples, hearing,
Shall hail Thee crowned King.

[Translated by *Israel Zangwill*.]

“THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD, I SHALL NOT WANT”

The Lord my Shepherd is, no want I know;
He leadeth me where tranquil waters flow;
I lie in pastures green.
Yea, though I walk within the gloomy shade
Where Death doth lurk, I will not be afraid,
For on Thy staff I lean.

In vain mine enemies would me despoil;
My cup o'erfloweth still with wine and oil,
My food Thou dost provide.
Thy mercy and Thy goodness both will last,
And when my days upon this earth are past,
With Thee I yet shall bide.

—*Re Henry.*

WE THANK THEE

For flowers that bloom about our feet;
For tender grass, so fresh, so sweet;
For song of bird and hum of bee;
For all things fair we hear or see—
Father in Heaven, we thank Thee!

For blue of stream and blue of sky;
For pleasant shade of branches high;
For fragrant air and cooling breeze;
For beauty of the blooming trees—
Father in Heaven, we thank Thee!

For mother-love and father-care;
For brothers strong and sisters fair;
For love at home and school each day;
For guidance lest we go astray—
Father in Heaven, we thank Thee!

—*Anonymous.*

“FATHER—HERE AM I”

[This may be sung 'to the melody of “Morn In Its Splendor”, by the whole school, or recited by one of the Primary pupils after the offerings have been presented.]

Father, we thank Thee, for the joys of every day,
And we would serve Thee . . . In our own small way,
We who know such plenty, with the needy let us share,
Help us make their burden easier to bear.

Give then, for Israel. Hark when little children cry;
Children then answer: “Father—Here am I.”

Great gifts or small ones, all are equal to the Lord,
Each kindly action brings its own reward;
So today let's gather just as much as we can spare;
It may bring the sunshine to a child somewhere.

Give then, for Israel. Hark when little children cry;
Children then answer: “Father—Here am I.”

—Fannie Barnett Linsky.

A SUCCOTH HYMN

For garnered fields and meadows cropped
And orchards plucked of peach and pear—
Lord, what Thy hand has given us,
For this we bring our grateful prayer.

To Thee we come with hearts made glad:
For wheat that is our staff and stay,
For oats and rye that caught the glint
Of sunset on a summer's day.

With face upturned in sun and rain,
And stout resolves to do our task—
O Lord, who gives to each his due,
Thy blessings for these do we ask.

That never faltering, though our arms
Were weary and our spirits spent;
That bravely we endured the toil
And anguish that the seasons sent.

We thank Thee, yea, for throbs of Love
That glorify each earth-born soul,
And link all pulsing hearts to Thee
In one vast, universal whole.

—*Joseph Leiser.*

THE CORN SONG

Heap high the farmer's wintry hoard!
Heap high the golden corn!
No richer gift has Autumn poured
From out her lavish horn.

Through vales of grass and meads of flowers
Our ploughs their furrows made,
While on the hills the suns and showers
Of changeful April played.

We dropped the seed o'er hill and plain
Beneath the sun of May,
And frightened from our sprouting grain
The robber crows away.

All through the long, bright days of June
Its leaves grew green and fair,
And waved in hot midsummer's noon
Its soft and yellow hair.

And now, with Autumn's moonlit eves,
Its harvest-time has come,
We pluck away the frosted leaves
And bear the treasure home.

Let earth withhold her goodly root,
Let mildew blight the rye;
Give to the worm the orchard's fruit,
The wheat-field to the fly;

But let the good old crop adorn
The hills our fathers trod;
Still let us, for His golden corn,
Send up our thanks to God.

—*John Greenleaf Whittier.*

MODEL PROGRAM FOR SUCCOTH

II

1. Processional with offerings which are placed on the altar.
2. Essay on Succoth and Simchath Torah:
 “THE PEOPLE OF THE LAND AND THE BOOK”,
 Intermediate or Senior
3. Song, “EN KELOHENU”, Union Hymnal 248.....*School*
4. Recitation, “THE TREASURE”*Intermediate or Senior*
5. Song, “NOT ALONE FOR MIGHTY EMPIRE”, Union
 Hymnal 224*School*
6. Operetta, “THE GOLDEN STAFF”.
7. Closing Song, “AMERICA”, Union Hymnal 226....*School*

VARIATIONS

For No. 4 may be substituted: "O Lord, We Come with Solemn Thankfulness" (page 47); "Israel and His Book" (page 47); "A Song for Succoth" (page 48); "Simchath Torah" (page 50).

No. 5, or "Once More the Liberal Year Laughs Out," Union Hymnal 197.

THE TREASURE

It was good to give thanks to the Lord
 For the sun and the rain,
 For the corn and the wine He bestowed,
 For the golden-wreathed grain;
 But now, as the festal week ends,
 'Neath the palms which we wave,
 We cry thanks to the Giver of Good
 For the Torah He gave.

For the Law of the Lord it is good,
 And His precepts are right:
 The simple of heart He makes wise,
 His commandments bring light;
 More goodly His words than fine gold—
 Aye, a treasure to save;
 And we thank, with rejoicing, our God,
 For the Torah He gave.

O Harvesters, rich in your spoils,
 Not alone by the bread
 Which we win by the sweat of our brows
 Are the sons of dust fed;
 Nay, we live by the words of His mouth,
 And, 'neath palms which we wave,
 We cry thanks to the Giver of Good
 For the Torah He gave.

—*Elma Ehrlich Levinger.*

O LORD, WE COME WITH SOLEMN THANKFULNESS

O Lord, we come with solemn thankfulness,
As in the days of old our fathers came,
For all Thy mercies, great and numberless,
To praise in sacred song Thy holy name.

For all the glories of the earth and sky,
For all the changeful beauties of the year,
We bring our thanks to Thee, O Lord, most High,
When that the Feast of Weeks again is here.

Fair are Thine earthly works, and wonders all,
But not alone for these our thanks we give;
A greater blessing we this day recall—
Thy holy Law by which our souls shall live.

Thy people Israel hear, with joy and awe,
The ancient words, which shall eternal be:
Abundant peace have they who love Thy Law,
And perfect rest whose mind is stayed on Thee.

—*Alice Lucas.*

ISRAEL AND HIS BOOK

An age-worn wanderer, pale with thought and tears,
With heart heroic and prophetic look,
Comes clasping to his breast the Sacred Book—

The amulet of Israel through the years!
“Behold!” he says, “through ages dark with fears,
Through travail and through miseries that shook
The soul of Judah, this he ne’er forsook.

It is his Book! . . . Therein his God appears!”

His Book! More glorious with supernal light
Than all the beacons reared by mortal hands
Since time first lisped its anguish in the night.

His Book! That gave a God to all the lands—
Whose pages shall through us again reveal
The wondrous promise grief could not conceal!

—*Felix N. Gerson.*

A SONG FOR SUCCOTH

The fields are gold with harvest,
 The vines in purple glow;
 Thy people, blest with plenty,
 Their bounteous reaping show;
 Dear God, who gave the sunshine
 And sent the summer rain,
 Shed blessing on the offerings
 We render Thee again.

Of old the singing pilgrims
 With offerings sought Thy shrine;
 The richest yield of field and tree
 Was consecrated Thine.
 Today we Jewish children
 Our grateful harvest bear,
 To lay upon Thine altar
 With this, our Succoth prayer:

"Dear God, who gave the harvest",
 Thy happy children pray,
 "Thanks for the bounteous blessings
 We reap in joy today.
 Teach us to share them gladly
 With those less blest than we,
 Since all we give to others
 We render back to Thee."

—*Elma Ehrlich Levinger.*

SIMCHATH TORAH

Full oft has the ark been opened,
And in the sad procession
Our fathers bore the sacred Law,
Their one most dear possession.

While unto the foe abandoned,
To ravish and to spoil,
They left their rich and plenteous store,
The fruits of a life of toil.

And into the regions unfathomed
They bore the precious scroll,
To shield it or to die for it,
To pay the exile's toll.

Yet in today's pageant procession
Of banner and scroll and light,
The Jew clasps tight the self-same Law
He bore through oppression's night.

Rejoice then, O Israel! Thy praise
Unto Thy Maker give.
No more the Torah bids thee die,
Today it bids thee live!

Let revelry hold its sway then,
And the hour be given to cheer;
For the cycle of reading is ended
On the happiest day of the year.

And lest the mocker, derisive,
Avow you delight to be through,
Lovingly wind it from end to start—
Begin to read it anew!

—C. David Matt.

SIMCHATH TORAH

Thy Law, Almighty wisdom,
 Our treasure e'er will be;
 The safely-guarded jewel
 Of Israel's unity.

From fathers unto children
 Descends this heritage,
 Firm as the heavens above us,
 Defying time and age.

The flames illumined Sinai,
 That spot is sacred still;
 And when the Scroll is opened
 Thy voice our souls does thrill.

And, though through generations,
 Toil and hardships met the Jew,
 Yet to Thy holy scriptures
 Unto this day he's true.

Let glory, hallelujah,
 From East to West resound;
 Find tongues, ye hills, ye brooklets,
 And help us swell the sound.

Let everything created
 In grateful accent sing
 To Him who gave the Torah—
 Lord Adonai, our King!

—Margaret Fireman.

CHANUKAH

CHANUKAH IN THE CLASS-ROOM

“IF CHANUKAH is a children’s Holiday”, says Rabbi Louis Grossmann in his thought-provoking series of lesson helps for the holiday, “it must have a child-significance . . . If we treat Chanukah as a mere entertainment, we despoil it of its significance. For everything in the School must have educational value, or else it should have no place in it. And a lesson must be presented from the point of view of the needs of the child for which it is meant, or else it is irrelevant and futile.”

This plea for consideration of the child’s point of view in arranging our holiday celebrations is never more timely than at Chanukah. Such themes as loyalty to Judaism and the struggle of monotheism against the paganism of the early world should be treated only in the highest grades. As Rabbi Grossmann rightly points out, it is the nature side of the festival which is the most appealing to the young child, who, in spite of our artificial modern environment, still dwells close to the heart of nature.

For the Primary Division, then, emphasize the seasonal aspects of the holiday. Even the sheltered city child can be made to feel the hardships of the short, sunless, winter days to the farmer; with a bit of skillful word painting, such as Longfellow’s description of the Famine in “Hiawatha”, the child realizes something of the utter desolation of savage people at the

mercy of the winter's cold. Then tell how all primitive peoples, suffering from the famine and cold of the winter months, rejoiced at the return of the sun in December, for they knew that soon he would bring them longer days and warmth and enough to eat. They had dances and games to celebrate this happy time; they lit great bonfires, which looked like suns glowing upon the earth, and carried torches. These celebrations happened long ago, but even today people all over the earth keep their mid-winter festival and rejoice that soon the sun will brighten the earth and drive away the winter's cold.

And just as in the very old days people lit bonfires and swung torches, so we celebrate our Feast of Lights with singing and rejoicing and lighting candles. First in Germany, and now in Europe and America, Christian people celebrated their mid-winter holiday by lighting candles upon hemlock and pine trees which they called Christmas trees. But Jewish boys and girls light candles in their menorahs, which are modeled after the lamp that stood in our Temple at Jerusalem hundreds and hundreds of years ago. You children will receive candles to take home and light every night of our festival of Chanukah, the Jewish Feast of Lights.

After this lesson, the teacher should give out the paper models for the menorahs and candles (sold by Bloch for a trifling sum), which are easily cut out and set up, and never fail to please the little ones. If these models are not used, menorahs may be drawn in outline and colored, or cut out of black or colored paper and pasted on white. The most artistic may be

pasted upon posters used to announce the holiday program. This is also an excellent time for teaching any of the "candle drills" or "candle dances" to be used in the celebration.

The second lesson for the Primary Division should begin something in this manner: Last week, children, we learned how glad everybody is that the winter's cold and hardships are all over. All people celebrate the coming of light. But the Jewish people celebrate their Feast of Lights to remember how very unhappy and dark everything seemed to them long ago, when wicked people wanted to hurt them and God sent them brave men to bring them light and freedom.

Here follows the story of Judas Maccabeus, which may be told even more simply for very young children, with additional facts and color added for children with more background:

Once, long, long ago, when the Jewish people lived in a land of their own called Palestine, there was a little Jewish boy named Judas. He was a merry little boy, full of all sorts of tricks and fond of play, and, as he had four brothers, you can imagine what fun they had playing together. They liked to play soldier best of all, and, somehow, they always made Judas their captain; perhaps, because he always led them the best.

In those days there were a great many Jewish boys who did not care to go to the Jewish schools and to learn about Jewish things. They said, "We don't care to be Jews any more. We want to be like the Greeks."

The Greeks were a bigger nation than the Jewish

people. They had come into Palestine and now ruled the country. They tried to make the Jewish people stop going to their Temple; they didn't want the Jewish people to keep their Sabbath any more. They wanted the Jewish people to be just like the Greeks.

And, as I have told you, a great many Jewish boys were glad to learn the Greek ways and not go to the Jewish schools and study the books of their own people. But Judas kept on going to his teacher and learned all that he could. And whenever he had any time to himself, instead of playing with the Greek boys, he would take long walks among the hills around Modin, where he lived. He used to find caves hidden among the rocks—caves where Jewish soldiers could hide if there should be a war. And he would say to himself: "When I am a man I will ask all the Jewish boys to join my army. Then if the Greeks will not let us alone, we will drive them away, and the Jewish people will be free again!"

Now that is just what happened. The Greek people became more and more cruel to the Jews. Whenever they found a Jewish man or woman, or even a little child, who kept the Jewish laws, the Greeks put them to death. Judas was a man now, and, like all good people, he hated war. He did not want to see the homes of his people destroyed and the country laid waste; he did not wish to see brave men die in battle, even the Greeks who had been so cruel to his people. But he knew that there was no other way to drive out the wicked Greeks who tried to keep the people of Palestine from being good Jews.

So Judas gathered his brothers and his friends

about him and became their captain. He was a great soldier, but it took him a very long time to win the war, for the Greeks had more soldiers who were better trained and had better weapons. Sometimes Judas and his men had to hide in the caves in the hills he had discovered when a boy, just as our own George Washington had to hide with his tired, hungry soldiers, when he fought for the United States so many years ago.

But God helped Judas and his men, and at last they drove the wicked Greeks away and were able to enter their own Temple at Jerusalem again. They cleaned it and made it beautiful, and lit many lights in the Temple, and their celebration lasted eight whole days. They lit their lamps just as we send up sky-rockets on Fourth of July, the day America became free—just as I told you last week the people used to light bonfires at their great winter festivals. For they were so happy that light and freedom had come to them. And even to this day we light candles every night for eight nights during the week of the Chanukah festival, in remembrance of our Jewish Feast of Lights and of Judas and his brave soldiers who saved the Temple for the Jewish people.

As in the other holiday celebrations, the ceremonial aspect should be stressed in telling the story of the festival to the pupils of the Intermediate Division. Tell the story of the Maccabean struggle very briefly, emphasizing as its climax the celebration at the Rededication of the Temple, so vividly pictured in the Book of Maccabees. Tell the tradition that the first menorah consisted of candles thrust upon the spear

points of Judas' soldiers. Then comes the story of the cruse of oil, with all its picturesque details and the happy conclusion so dear to the heart of every child. When the victorious army enter the Temple polluted by the heathen and wish to re-dedicate it to their God, they can find no oil to light the holy lamps, since it has all been defiled by the enemy. But a little child playing in one of the inner rooms of the Temple comes running triumphantly to his mother, bearing a cruse of oil, still unopened and undefiled. This oil rekindles the lights in the long-darkened menorah, while swift messengers are sent for more oil to feed the sacred flame. It is eight days until they return, but for eight long days the little flames burn bravely on, a miracle which we still celebrate today by burning lights in our menorahs for eight successive nights.

This story, by the way, is excellent for class-room dramatization; it may be impromptu, or the older pupils may be encouraged to write a simple little play on the theme, which can be presented, after a few minor changes, as part of the school's more ambitious program. An excellent example of such a play as "Ruth", found on page 255 in this volume, which was written and presented by children of the fifth grade.

From the ceremonies of the first Chanukah pass to the ceremonial rites which grew up about the festival. Explain the significance of the *Shammass*, and refer to the controversy which arose over the order of lighting the candles, some of the early rabbis preferring to begin with eight lights and diminish; others, who finally won the day, deciding that the candles should increase each night as the Jew should increase in holiness.

A peep into Israel Abrahams' "Festival Studies" will give the teacher a fine picture of the joy the Chanukah days brought to our people in medieval times, the elaborate festivals in Venice, the simple games and merrymaking in Ghetto homes where the Menorah burned in every window. If time permits, show the children a few pictures of the menorahs created by Jewish artists in a time when our people devoted their artistic talents only to ceremonial objects, calling their attention to any art objects the Temple itself contains, such as the Ner Tamid or the Menorah upon the altar.

If the younger children have not been taught the blessing over the Chanukah lights, both the Hebrew and the English translation should be taught to the children of the Intermediate period. A charming poetic version of the latter may be found in Miss Sampster's book, "Around the Year in Rhymes", already referred to. An excellent custom now in vogue in many schools is to present every pupil with a tin menorah and a box of candles to be used during the week of the festival. When this proves too expensive, it is usually found that the children are very eager to purchase their own. By all means check up results and find out how many children actually lit the candles every night and how many recited either the Hebrew or the English blessing. In case no party is planned for Purim, it will often be found advisable to have a Chanukah celebration for the children on Saturday afternoon of Chanukah week; simple refreshments may be served, a short program given, and after darkness falls, the menorah lighted with the

blessing given by one of the pupils and a song by the school. Such a celebration can never take the place of a home celebration of the holiday, but it will do a great deal to give the festival the flavor of informality often lacking in more ambitious school entertainments.

In treating Chanukah for the Senior Division, let the teacher place more emphasis upon its historical aspects. The thrilling story of Mattathias and his sons should be told at length, from the moment when he gives his rallying cry before the altar of Modin to the day when the singing people enter their Temple and re-dedicate the rescued shrine. It must be a story not only of heroes who fought upon the field of battle, but the tale of martyrs who died more obscurely but no less heroically, that their faith might live. But in telling the stories of Eleazar, of Hannah and her seven sons, the teacher must not emphasize the horror so stressed by the early writers; do not underrate their heroism, but do not ignore the fact that from their day to the present time countless Jews have died just as heroically for their religion.

In picturing these historical scenes, a brief extract from the Books of the Maccabees or the reading of several of the verses given below will do much to vivify the picture. Nor should the teacher forget to call the pupil's attention to scenes he will see in the play to be presented that year, the defiance of Mattathias (Act I, "Light of Israel") or the filial devotion of Hannah's sons ("Mother of Martyrs").

But the story of battle and martyrdom will be of comparatively little value if it remains unspiritualized.

The child must learn why the Maccabees and those who followed them were willing to fight and die. Not all of the following material can be given to any one class; such a subject as the struggle between monotheism and the Syrian worship of many gods must be left to the Confirmation or even Post-Confirmation Class. But even the lowest class of the Senior Division can be taught something of the background against which our fathers waged the first war ever fought for religious liberty.

As Graetz so ably points out, the struggle was more than national, since it was the clash between two civilizations. Try to give the Senior pupil a glimpse of the great gulf between the two ideals, Hebrew and Hellenistic—the Hebrew with his passion for holiness, the Greek with his love for beauty. Contrast briefly and tactfully the purity of the Jewish home and the general looseness of pagan society; picture the Jew devoted to his studies, the Greek spending his days at the gymnasium. Then show the greatest contrast of all—the Jew pledged to the worship of the one God, the Greek believing in many, thus making the struggle one between the followers of monotheism and polytheism.

In describing the background of the Chanukah story to Seniors, one point must not be overlooked. In the days of Judas, the Maccabee, there were many Jews who needed no coercion to adopt the heathen ways. The Hasmoneans were Jews who remained loyal to all that their religion taught; but the Hellenists were Jews who loved the Greek ways, adopted their

dress and language, and even went so far as to desert their Temple for the shrines of the pagan gods.

Even today—the teacher may tell the more advanced pupils—we have Jews who are so indifferent to their religion, so quick to follow un-Jewish customs, that they may be called Hellenists. In this connection, the question will surely arise whether Jews should keep Christmas, and it should not be difficult to compare the celebration of a Christian holiday with the eagerness which the Hellenists of old days manifested for keeping non-Jewish customs. Often, when the Chanukah festival falls very close to the reputed birthday of the founder of the Christian religion, some of the pupils are likely to ask questions that have troubled them concerning the attitude a Jew should take toward Jesus. An excellent study of Jesus as a Jewish teacher, written with the child's perplexities in view, will be found in Chapters XIV and XV of Jack M. Myers' "Story of the Jewish People" (Bloch).

For the Senior as well as the Intermediate Division, the handwork should apply directly to the Holiday scrap-books described in the section devoted to Succoth. However, if a historical play is to be given, the boys may be urged to make spears, an altar, etc., after their regular manual training classes in public school; the older girls should be induced to help with the costumes, while the younger ones may construct jewelry, flower wreaths and other simple properties.

If no formal entertainment is given, no better time could be found for a simple party for the parents of the pupils of the Senior Division. All the homely features of this essentially home-festival should be em-

phasized. The children can themselves prepare and serve the simple refreshments and be responsible for the informal program, which, it goes without saying, should be woven about the holiday. The climax of the celebration should be the lighting of the menorah with appropriate singing. An excellent home service for children and parents for Chanukah has been devised by the late Rabbi J. Leonard Levy. This might be made the basis of the evening's program, and the party should be held, if possible, on the first night of Chanukah, that the parents may be urged to introduce this or some similar service into their own homes and have the children light the menorah for the remaining nights of the festal week.

This holiday is especially rich in stories and legends which may be read aloud in class, if time permits, or assigned for home reading, the older pupils presenting abstracts to be read in class. The references, of course, are only for the advanced pupils or the teachers.

STORIES ABOUT CHANUKAH

REFERENCES FOR INTERMEDIATES

Modern

"CANDLE LIGHTS" from "*A Modern Esther*"—Emily Goldsmith Gerson (Greenstone).

"THE MAGIC TOP" from "*Breakfast of the Birds*"—translated by Emily Solis-Cohen (Jewish Pub. Soc.).

"THE LIGHT THAT FAILED" from "*Jewish Holyday Stories*"—Elma Ehrlich Levinger (Bloch).

"THE CHANUKAH" from "*Festival Stories*"—Hannah Trager (Dutton).

Historical

"THE SACRIFICE AT MODIN" from "*David the Giant Killer*"—Emily Solis-Cohen (Jewish Pub. Soc.).

"THE STORY OF HANNUKKAH" from "*Jewish Child's Bible Stories*"—Altman (Bloch).

REFERENCES FOR SENIORS

Modern

"A HANNUKKAH NIGHT" from "*The Young Champion*"—Abram S. Isaacs (Jewish Pub. Soc.).

"WHAT THE CANDLES SAY" from "*Apples and Honey*", by A. S. Doniach (Bloch).

Historical

"FRIENDS" from "*Playmates in Egypt*"—Elma Ehrlich Levinger (Jewish Pub. Soc.).

"THE MENORAH OF REMEMBRANCE" from "*In Many Lands*"—Elma Ehrlich Levinger (Bloch).

REFERENCES FOR HIGHEST GRADES AND TEACHERS

BIBLE: The Apocrypha (I Maccabees, 1-4; II Maccabees, 6-7).

HISTORY OF THE JEWS (Vol. I, Chapters 22-23). Graetz.

OUTLINES OF JEWISH HISTORY (Chap. IV). Magnus.

JEWISH ENCYCLOPEDIA: Hanukkah and related articles on ceremonials, etc.

BIBLE FOR HOME READING. (Vol. II, 660-662; 669-670 (notes); 753-755. Montefiore.

THE HANUKKAH FESTIVAL. Dr. Louis Grossmann (Bloch).

Moses' HANUKKAH SERVICE (Bloch).

HANUKKAH SERVICES IN THE HOME. Rabbi J. Leonard Levy.

FESTIVAL STUDIES. Israel Abrahams (Greenstone).

IN MANY LANDS. Elma Ehrlich Levinger (Bloch).

THE CHANUKAH PROGRAM

Although the author has already pleaded several times for short programs, she will do so again, since the long program is one of the most common pitfalls for the entertainment director. Especially is this true of such holidays as Chanukah, with their tempting wealth of material. The writer herself shudders to remember how in the days when she was untaught, but enthusiastic, she actually crowded into one afternoon's program two playlets, one representing Hannah's martyrdom, the other the observance of Chanukah in a modern home—to say nothing of a long dialogue when the menorah was lighted, a dance of the Chanukah candles, numerous recitations and musical numbers. The numbers were all short, and for the most part well presented, but the mass effect was somewhat appalling.

In a holiday so rich as Chanukah, both in ideas and material, choose carefully just what will be your principal idea for this year's celebration, and plan your program accordingly. Use your simpler ideas as the center of simple programs; reserve your more spectacular themes for the next year when Chanukah will be celebrated as one of the outstanding features of the year's work.

In the three model programs which follow, the author has attempted to present three programs of varying simplicity of theme, length and difficulty. The

first is intended chiefly for informal gatherings in the Sabbath School such as parents' parties, already described in the text. Although it contains a few numbers for the older children, these can be omitted and the program left entirely in the hands of the pupils of the Primary and Intermediate Divisions. It will be seen that it turns about the nature aspect of the holiday. If the matter of costumes and properties proves too laborious for such a simple affair—although every Sabbath School should have a modest but sufficient stage wardrobe on hand—the tableaux also may be dropped.

The second program, while more ambitious, should not be featured, but should be given more or less informally. In this the children of the Intermediate Division present the ceremonial homely aspect of the holiday in the little play "Pictures Out of the Past". A little more emphasis is placed on the historical background for the holiday, but all ethical inferences are left for the program of the Senior Division.

This third program should be presented only when there are no elaborate entertainments planned for Succoth and Purim. The long play, "The Light of Israel", or any other historical drama selected from the appended list, again forms the pivot on which the whole entertainment turns. Every recitation and song should be chosen with this thought in view: that this program represents not only the power of Light over Darkness, but the heroic victories of our ancestors against almost overwhelming odds. The Seniors should be largely responsible for this program, although recitations and songs are introduced for the

younger children for sake of variety, and that they may also have their share in the festival.

Two short bits of verse to print upon the posters or programs are given below, with the reminder that even an unskilled artist can make an attractive border if he works the menorah into his design.

Little candles, shed your light,
And illuminate our night;
Speak of him who made us free,
Israel's hero—Maccabee.

—Margaret Fireman.

(The following may be given, with the picture of a child sitting beside a menorah):

How the story of those days
Fills my wondering heart with praise,
And in every flame one sees
The heroic Maccabees.

—Judith Ish-Kishor.

PLAYS FOR CHANUKAH

INTERMEDIATE DIVISION AND SENIOR DIVISION.....*Modern*

"The Unlighted Menorah". Elma Ehrlich Levinger. Published with this volume,

for which may be substituted

"A Make-Believe Chanukah", eight boys, seven girls, minor characters; a three-act historical play done in modern fashion with a modern prologue. Joseph Leiser. (Syn. and Sch. Ex.).

"Enemies of Israel", seven boys, five girls, minor characters; a one-act fantasy; contains several songs and a drill for lighting the candles. Louis Broido. (Syn. and Sch. Ex.).

"Pictures Out of the Past", two boys, four girls; a charming little play written about a group of tableaux based on the Chanukah story. Louis Witt. (Syn. and Sch. Ex.).

"Dreambook", ten boys, three girls; introducing the characters of the Chanukah story in a modern setting; brightened with lively songs. Henry Woolf. (Bloch.)

"A Unique Chanukah Party", three boys, four girls; a quick-moving little fantasy with music; introduces the characters of the Chanukah story. Henry Woolf.

"A Maccabean Cure", ten boys, three girls; a pleasant little play in which a group of boys enact the Chanukah story for a friend unable to come to Sabbath School, from *"The Power of Purim and Other Plays"*. Irma Kraft. (Jewish Publication Society.)

"*The Brass Candelabra*", four boys, two girls; a play of modern life, the action turning about the discovery of an old Chanukah lamp. Emily Gerson. (Bloch.)

"*What's Tonight?*"; three boys, five girls; a rollicking farce in two acts; the scene is laid at a celebration of the Chanukah festival. Samuel S. Grossman. (Young Judea.)

"*When the Candles Smoked*", fifteen boys, eight girls (part can be doubled); quaint lively allegory, showing how the Chanukah candles tell a little boy the story of the holiday. Judith Ish-Kishor. (Bloch.)

"*The Capture*", three boys, one girl; exciting drama which portrays how a quick-witted girl saved her people on Chanukah. Rufus Lears. (Young Judea.)

"*Hannah*", five girls; a short play for young children, telling how a modern little girl tries to be like Hannah. Jessie E. Sampter. (Young Judea.)

INTERMEDIATE DIVISION AND SENIOR DIVISION.....*Historical*

"*Light of Israel*" Elma Ehrlich Levinger. Published with this volume; for which may be substituted:

"*Mother of Martyrs*", ten boys, one girl; a one-act play telling the story of Hannah and her sons. Samuel S. Grossman. (Young Judea.)

"*David of Modin*", eleven boys, two girls; a play in a prologue and three acts, portraying the adventures of a young soldier in the Maccabean army. Jacob Liebson. (Bloch.)

NOTE: Several of the above plays would be better for a little judicious cutting; in case an extremely poetic historical play is desired, Longfellow's "*Judas Maccabeus*" may be presented, if only the most important scenes are shown. "*A Chanukah Songster*" by A. W. Binder (Bloch) and the operetta, "*Judas Maccabeus*" (the same author and publisher) will be found most useful when musical programs are desired.

MODEL PROGRAM FOR CHANUKAH

I

1. Service VIII, Union Hymnal, or Service prepared
by Rabbi J. Leonard Levy,
Read by Seniors or Post-Confirmands
2. Song, "EN KELOHENU", Union Hymnal 288.....*School*
3. Essay on Chanukah, "THE FEAST OF LIGHTS",
Intermediate
4. Recitation, "THE MIRACLE OF THE CRUSE OF OIL",
Intermediate
5. Lighting the Chanukah Candles,
Primary or Intermediate
6. Recitation, "JOSEPH'S CANDLE",
Primary or Intermediate
7. Dance of Chanukah Candles.....*Primary Pupils*
8. FEAST OF LIGHTS (Recitation and Song, Union
Hymnal 192).....*School*
9. Tableaux: STORY OF CHANUKAH.
10. Closing Song, "ROCK OF OUR SALVATION", Union
Hymnal 189)*School*

VARIATIONS

For No. 4 may be substituted the recitation, "The Cruse of Oil" (page 73), for a Primary Pupil; or the recitation, "The Shammash" (page 74), for an Intermediate or Senior.

No. 5, the Primary children would find the drill by Miriam Myers (page 78) most suitable; the drill by Rabbi Moses (page 75) is more appropriate for Intermediates.

For No. 6 may be substituted: "Chanukah Dreams" (page 81); "Golden Lights" (page 81); "My Chanukah Candles," (page 84).

No. 9, if a play with tableaux is desired, an excellent one for the purpose is "Pictures Out of the Past," by Rabbi Louis Witt (published by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations).

THE MIRACLE OF THE CRUSE OF OIL

A TALE IN VERSE FOR CHANUKAH

They stood within the Temple court,
Those Jews who fought and won,
The warriors who subdued the Greeks
And Mattathias' son;
Tall Judas stood above the throng
His face to God upraised,
And thanked Him for his victory
And offered Him his praise.

The priests stood in the Temple courts
The heathen had defiled;
At last there spoke an ancient priest,
A patriarch grave and mild:
"Lord Judas, we have cleansed the House
You bought us with your sword;
Yet we must halt in our great feast
Which magnifies the Lord.

"The sacred Lamp upon his shrine
It still unlighted stands,
For we can find no holy oil
Unstained by heathen hands;
And though we send swift messengers,
'Twill take them many days
To bring the oil to light the lamps
Before the Lord we praise."

As Judas frowned, a little child,
Who'd wandered off to play,
Ran boldly out before the crowd
And did in triumph say:
"Lord Judas, and you mighty men
Who bled to save our land,
Lo, I have found a cruse of oil
Unstained by heathen hand."

“And it was so! The little child
Had found a cruse of oil,
Well hidden in an inner court,
Uncounted in the spoil.
It still was sealed; the happy priests
Relit the sacred flame,
While men and women wept for joy
And praised His holy name.

’Tis said the sacred oil burned on
For eight long, happy days;
The people held high festival
And never ceased their praise—
So we keep Chanukah eight days
In memory of the names
Of Judas and his mighty men
Who lit the sacred flames.

—*Elma Ehrlich Levinger.*

THE CRUSE OF OIL

“Through God our people now are free,
Thanks to the mighty Maccabee.
And now to God our praise we cry:
‘His Temple shall we purify.’”

But when the thankful people came
To light once more the sacred flame,
Before the altar—all their toil
Found but one cruse of holy oil.

Lo, while the messenger was gone,
The single cruse of oil burned on,
And through the eight long, wondrous days
The single cruse gave forth its rays.

So still we light the candles here,
 Remembering that time of fear,
 Remembering that time of praise,
 When one cruse burned for eight long days. ✕

—*Lee J. Levinger.*

THE SHAMMAS ✕

This little taper with its flame
 The other candles all ignites,
 And therefore it receives the name
 Of Shammas—Servant of the Lights.

Its brothers all it humbly serves
 To kindle and illuminate,
 And so I think it scarce deserves
 To stand alone—left to its fate.

O modest taper, in thy light
 A symbol I can plainly see,
 A token thou art in my sight
 Of Israel's noble history.

The souls of nations he enflamed
 With God-like fire from heaven above,
 For this of old he hath been named—
 Priest-people, serving men in love.

✕ —Translated from the original of *A. Kubla*,
 by *Dr. H. Berkowitz.*

THE CHANUKAH LIGHTS

[To be recited by seven children for the lights, the Prologue, who lights the Shammass, and the Epilogue who, before the last line spoken in chorus, places the Shammass in the menorah.]

PROLOGUE:

Eight lights we burn before the shrine
To celebrate this feast divine
In memory of the Maccabees:
Whose deeds heroic never cease
To fill our hearts with sacred trust
That win we shall, and fight we must,
In every age and every place,
As champions of God's trust and grace.

(advancing to menorah)

Each of these eight sacred flames
A noble Jewish deed proclaims;
Let each then tell its own brief story,
Though few the words, yet rich the glory.

FIRST LIGHT:

Who did amid the heathen world
First Jehovah's flag unfurl?
Who broke idolatry's baneful chain
And freed the soul of man from pain?
Abraham holds that lofty place—
The friend of God and of his race.

SECOND LIGHT:

Who brought to men the heavenly light,
That shows the paths of truth and right?
That Word revealed on Sinai's mound
Is now obeyed the world around.
"Be pure and just", was *Moses'* Law,
"Stand not of man, but God in awe."

THIRD LIGHT:

The people often went astray;
Who brought them back to Heaven's way?
Who but the *Seers*, forever blest:
Deborah's song, Samuel's behest,
Elijah brave, Isaiah true—
They taught the people what to do.

FOURTH LIGHT:

Then *Ezra* came, the priestly scribe,
The great restorer of his tribe;
How vast a power, that thus could save
A people ready for the grave!
And "Search the Scriptures" was his rule,
And "knowledge gained in wisdom's school."

FIFTH LIGHT:

The years rolled on and brought no hope,
Nor strength with odds of ill to cope;
Their courage lost in deep dismay
Under the Syrian tyrant sway;
But then the *Maccabees* appear,
Those heroes without blame or fear.

SIXTH LIGHT:

When Rome, with strong, resistless force,
To Zion's hill did bend her course,
Who saved the precious Law divine
And built for it another shrine?
The faithful *Rabbis*, west and east,
Replaced the prophet and the priest.

SEVENTH LIGHT:

See Judah in the Middle Age,
The Christian's scorn, the Moslem's rage!
Fanatics, blind with frantic zeal,
Bid him to other Gods to kneel;
He knows but One, eternal, true—
The *Martyr* dies but cannot rue.

EIGHTH LIGHT:

And now we live in brighter days;
Past are the dark and cruel ways,
For liberty inspires the soul
To reach the *Messianic* goal.
The might of right breaks every chain,
And Israel's light shines forth again.

EPILOGUE:

We children of the Hebrew race
Approach today with joyous face
The Lord of Hosts, the only One,
And praise Him for His wonder done.
After so many thousand years
His faithful people still appears
As fresh and sturdy as of yore,
As rich a fruit, as sound a core.
On Asia's plains, by Egypt's stream,
Where glaciers shine, volcanoes gleam,
Where Tiber flows, Mississippi rolls—
Everywhere the Jew his God extolls.
And on this sacred festal day,
Our souls illumined by its ray,
We, too, proclaim with one accord: [All]
Who is like Thee, Eternal Lord!

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OVER THE CHANUKAH LIGHTS

[*A dialogue for eight little boys who, each in turn, lights his candle before beginning his first line.*]

FIRST BOY: Two thousand years and more ago—

SECOND BOY: Oh pshaw! You must be fooling;
Two thousand years—

FIRST BOY: That's what I said;
I guess I've had some schooling.
Now listen; please don't talk so much,
And you will hear the story
Of how the Jews fought, long ago,
For Israel's faith and glory.

SECOND BOY: Well, go ahead.

THIRD BOY: On Chanukah,
Our Feast of Dedication—
Sometimes it's called the Feast of Lights—
This time of celebration——

FOURTH BOY: ——The wicked king, Antiochus,——
(*Stepping forward to face him*)

SECOND BOY: The Syrian King! I know him!

FOURTH BOY: You silly boy! How to be quiet
I wish you all would show him.
(*Others put fingers on their closed lips*)

FIFTH BOY: This dreadful king forbade the Jews
To keep the law of Moses.
Said he, "Each one shall surely die
If he my wish opposes."

SIXTH BOY: Some said they'd pray to gods of stone—
Of course they just pretended!
But some were brave, although they knew
Their lives might soon be ended.

- SECOND BOY: He'd not scare *me*, that crazy king,
 I'd shake *this* in his face, sir!
(Shakes fist)
 And say, "How dare you interfere with *me*
 And with the Jewish race, sir?"
- SEVENTH BOY: A family called the Maccabees—
 A father and five brothers—
 All said to God they would be true,
 And soon were joined by others.
- EIGHTH BOY: Three years they fought the Syrians,
 At last their foes defeating;
 They killed or chased them all away,
 Their victory completing.
- THIRD BOY: Jerusalem was all lit up
 In grand illumination;
 The people all were joining in
 This happy celebration.
- FIRST BOY: Now let us celebrate today,
 And sing in happy chorus;
 But first I'll bless the festal lights
 As our fathers did before us.

[*The others stand reverently as he recites the traditional blessing over the lights. Then they form in twos, in the order in which they have spoken, and march off, singing "God of Might"*].

—Miriam Myers, in "Hebrew Standard".

JOSEPH'S CANDLE

[*To be recited by a girl, who can suggest the voices of the two children and the mother.*]

We lit the lights for Chanukah,
 Sister and Son and I;
 'Twas twilight, and the baby stars
 Were peeping through the sky.

Said little Sister, as she watched
 Her candle's yellow flare:
 "I wonder if our Joseph keeps
 His Chanukah up there."

Son's eyes were bright with childhood's faith:
 "Why, brother isn't far;
 It's Chanukah in Heaven now,
 And Joseph lights his star!"

—*Elma Ehrlich Levinger.*

A CANDLE DANCE FOR CHANUKAH

One by one the eight little girls who represent the Chanukah Candles dance upon the platform to a simple, lively melody. They should be dressed exactly alike, in white or yellow, to represent tallow (for the latter use crepe paper), no ribbons on their hair, and should be as nearly as possible of one size. Each in turn performs some simple steps before taking her place in the row which is formed near the back of the platform.

The *Shammas* or the Spirit of Light dances in. She should wear a dress of red, orange and yellow, to represent flame, or of one of these colors, covered with tinsel or any other glittering trimming. The best dancer in school should be chosen for this part. She performs a solo dance, which can be any sprightly dance adapted to this particular drill. Upon her arm she carries eight wreaths of red crepe paper and tinsel, each ornamented with a flaring bow. During the dance she weaves her way between the dancers, placing her crown of fire upon each head. She continues with her dance, which concludes when she removes the crown from each of the candles. They all sink slowly to the ground as she also bends in a low courtesy, suggesting by their position and bowed heads candles slowly dying in their sockets.

X CHANUKAH DREAMS

Chanukah I think most dear
Of the feasts of all the year.
I could sit and watch all night
Every twinkling baby light.

Father lights the first one—green;
“Hope”, it always seems to mean—
Hope and joy, that shine anew
In the heart of every Jew.

Jacob lights the blue, for “Truth”,
Pink, for “Love”, is lit by Ruth.
Then the white one falls to me—
White that shines for “Purity”.

How the story of those days
Fills my wondering heart with praise!
And in every flame one sees
The heroic Maccabees. X

—J. Ish-Kishor.

GOLDEN LIGHTS X

O golden lights, shine out anew,
Shine out with radiance bright and true;
While gazing on your golden glow
You speak to me of long ago.
Of patriots who shed their blood
For Israel's cause, for faith, for God.
Did not they sacrifice their all
When clarion-like there came the call:
“Who's on the Lord's side, come to me,
Lord among the gods, who is like Thee?” X

—Janie Jacobson.

CHANUKAH LIGHTS ARE SHINING

A SONG FOR CHANUKAH

Chanukah lights are shining brightly
Over the world this winter night,
And our hearts grow tender and grateful
As again gleams forth their light.

We tell o'er the olden story
Of the Maccabeans bold,
How they yielded not to tyrant—
Braver story ne'er was told!

Written fairly on their banner
Gleamed their watchword overhead:
"Who is like to Thee, Eternal!"
By His wisdom were they led.

Never wavered they, nor trembled,
Though so few, true to the right,
Loyal ever to their watchword,
So they triumphed over night.

As each year is told the story,
Little lights, send forth your ray!
"Who is like to Thee, Eternal!"
Shall our watchword be today!

—*Hadassah.*

CHANUKAH

We welcome thee joyfully, glorious night,
We hail thee with pleasure, O Chanukah light!
Its lustre, so brilliant, invites us to joy,
Invites us to praise Him, the great Adonoy!

He was our Redeemer in dark days of old,
When Syria's mad ruler, proud, cruel, and bold,
Proclaimed through Judea: "Your God I defy;
Bow down to my idols and worship—or die!"

Of brave, pious martyrs these bright candles tell,
Who yielded their souls, praying: "Hear Israel!"
Of Hannah, the mother, and seven sons so dear,
Who sealed with their life-blood their faith without fear.

But Israel's God never slumbers nor sleeps,
He ever is near him who mournfully weeps;
He saw our oppression, and, hearing our pleas,
Awakened to save us, the brave Maccabees.

Be welcome then—welcome, O glorious night—
We hail thee with pleasure, O Chanukah light!
Its lustre, so brilliant, invites us to joy,
Invites us to praise Him, the great Adonoy!

—*Louis Stern.*

MY CHANUKAH CANDLES

[To be recited by a small child standing before the lighted menorah.]

Eight little candles
All in a line,
Eight little candles
Glitter and shine.

Eight little candles
Smile and relate
Tales of a people
Heroic and great.

Eight little candles—
Each little flame
Whispers a legend
Of honor and fame.

Eight little candles
Bashfully hide
The soul of my nation—
Its glory and pride.

Eight little candles,
Sparklets of gold,
Tell me of battles
And heroes untold:

Heroes undaunted,
And noble and true—
Heroes who knew
How to dare and to do;

Heroes who taught
Generations to be
That man can be brave
And that man can be free.

Eight little candles;
Look at them well—
Floods could not quench them,
Tempest not quell.

Modest and frail
Is their light; yet it cheers
Israel in exile
Two thousand years.

Eight little candles,
Enchanting my soul,
Point to me—show me
An aim and a goal;

Whisper: Life's struggles
Are not all in vain;
Son of the brave,
You shall triumph again!

Eight little candles—
Their quivering gleams
Speak to my heart
In a language of dreams.

Dear to my soul
Is their smile and their cheer,
Sweet to my ear
Is their whisper to hear.

Courage, but courage,
Maccabee's brave son,
Fight for the right
And the battle is won!

—*P. M. Raskin.*

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Mass.)

CHANUKAH

Little candles, shed your light
And illuminate our night.
Tell your tale of conquest won
By Judea's warrior son—
Of the faith-born, wondrous power,
Granted in our darkest hour;
Speak of them who made us free:
Israel is champion—Maccabee.

Had we courage to be free
Would we need a Maccabee?
What is Slavery's iron chain
To the thrall of heart and brain?
What's the tyrant's rage, so blind,
To the listless human mind,
Or the champion's cunning skill
To the independent will?
What is worse—a cell's dim light
Or the soul's perpetual night?

Wake them! rouse them! candles bright,
Sleeping Israel, with your light!
Teach them that our chains of old
Meant but passing pain untold.
But the chains we forge each day
We alone may break; O say
That if we'd be wholly free
We can't wait for Maccabee.

—Margaret Fireman.

THE FEAST OF LIGHTS ¹

Kindle the taper, like the steadfast star
Ablaze on evening's forehead o'er the earth,
And add each night a lustre, till afar
An eightfold splendor shine above thy hearth.
Clash, Israel, the cymbals, touch the lyre,
Blow the brass trumpet and the harsh-tongued horn;
Chant psalms of victory till the heart take fire,
The Maccabean spirit keep new-born.

Remember how, from wintry dawn till night,
Such songs were sung in Zion, when again
On the high altar flamed the sacred light,
And, purified from every Syrian stain,
The foam-white walls with golden shields were hung
With crowns and silken spoils, and at the shrine
Stood, midst their conqueror-tribe, five chieftains, sprung
From one heroic stock, one seed divine.

Five branches grown from Mattathias' stem,
The Blessed John, the Keen-Eyed Jonathan,
Simon the fair, the Burst-of-Spring, the Gem,
Eleazar, Help of God; o'er all his clan
Judas, the Lion-Prince, the Avenging Rod,
Towered in warrior-beauty, uncrowned king,
Armed with the breastplate and the sword of God,
Whose praise is: "He received the perishing."

¹ This may be given as a recitation by an older pupil, combined with a song by the whole school. As soon as the speaker takes her place on the platform and recites the first four lines the children sing the same stanza after her. (Union Hymnal 192.) This is repeated with lines 5-8. The speaker finishes the poem, omitting the third stanza, if desired, not leaving the platform until the school has sung the concluding four lines.

They who had camped within the mountain-pass,
 Couched on the rock, and tented 'neath the sky,
 Who saw from Mizpah's height the tangled grass
 Choke the wide Temple-courts, the altar lie
 Disfigured and polluted—who had flung
 Their faces on the stones, and mourned aloud,
 And rent their garments, wailing with one tongue,
 Crushed as a wind-swept bed of reeds is bowed.

Even they by one voice fired, one heart of flame,
 Though broken reeds, had risen, and were men,
 They rushed upon the spoiler and o'ercame,
 Each arm for freedom had the strength of ten.
 Now is their mourning into dancing turned,
 Their sackcloth doffed for garments of delight,
 Week-long the festive torches shall be burned,
 Music and revelry wed day with night.

Still ours the dance, the feast, the glorious Psalm,
 The mystic lights of emblem and the Word.
 Where is our Judas? Where are our five-branched palm?
 Where are the lion-warriors of the Lord?
 Clash, Israel, the cymbals, touch the lyre,
 Sound the brass trumpet and the harsh-tongued horn,
 Chant hymns of victory till the heart take fire,
 The Maccabean spirit leap new-born!

—*Emma Lazarus.*

THE SPIRIT OF CHANUKAH

A SET OF TABLEAUX FOR THE CHANUKAH PROGRAM

[*The Reader stands concealed behind the curtains and recites the description of the tableau as soon as the curtain is drawn. The music is played more softly during the reading. The violin will be found the most suitable.*]

I

READER: *Israel mourns for her martyred dead.* In days of old Antiochus, the Syrian king, decreed that every Jew within his realm must bow to the Grecian gods or suffer death. Men, women, and even little children preferred to die rather than to forsake the faith of their fathers, and Israel bowed her head in anguish for her martyred dead.

PICTURE: A tall, slender girl of a distinct Jewish type represents Israel. She is dressed in long, trailing garments of some dark material; her hair hangs about her shoulders. She should be posed in profile against a curtain or screen of some bright color—preferably red—her head leaning against her right arm, her left hand trailing a palm branch at her side.

MUSIC: Slow and somber.

II

READER: *Israel gives a sword to her defender, Judas the Maccabee.* But there rose in the land a defender, Judas Maccabeus, and to him Israel gave the sword, that he might go forth and battle for the right.

PICTURE: Israel stands facing the audience, about to place her sword in the hands of Judas, who kneels at her feet, looking up into her face. He wears a purple robe, helmet and breastplate.

MUSIC: Solemn and martial.

III

READER: *Israel rekindles the Chanukah tapers for the children of today.* Centuries have passed since our fathers fought and died for the faith which they have left to us, but even to this day Israel lights the Menorah of Remembrance, that our little children may look upon it and pass down the sacred light through the ages.

PICTURE: Israel stands surrounded by three (or five) little children dressed in contrasting colors. Several cling to her dress. The youngest stretches his hands to the lighted menorah she holds above their heads with one hand, the other hand resting upon the head of one of the little tots.

MUSIC: At first the melody of the Chanukah hymn is played and continues during the reading. As the reader concludes the children in the tableaux and those in the audience sing the first stanza.

Elma Ehrlich Levinger

MODEL PROGRAM FOR CHANUKAH

II

1. Opening Song, "ROCK OF AGES", Union Hymnal
189 *School*
2. Lighting the Candles.....*Intermediate*
3. Essay, CHANUKAH IN OTHER TIMES AND TODAY,
Intermediate
4. Tableaux Recitation, "BEFORE A MENORAH",
Primary or Intermediate
5. Song, "TEN THOUSAND MARTYRS DIED FOR ISRAEL'S
CAUSE", Union Hymnal 133.....*School*
6. Recitation, "JUDAS MACCABEUS TO HIS SOLDIERS",
Intermediate or Senior
7. Song, "PLEDGING OUR LIVES AND OUR STRENGTH",
Union Hymnal 135*School*
8. Play, "THE UNLIGHTED MENORAH".....*Seniors*
9. Closing Song, "AMERICA", Union Hymnal 226....*School*

VARIATIONS

No. 2 may be given as a drill (see the two on pages 92 and 93) or one child may light the candles and say the traditional blessing over them.

No. 4 should be omitted if the program grows too long, or if the play presented should, like the "Chanukah Dream Book" or "Pictures Out of the Past," include tableau effects. In this case, any of the recitations suggested below should be given.

For No. 6 may be substituted: "The Feast of Lights" (page 97); "A Chanukah Song" (page 98); "Song of Judas Maccabeus" (page 99), or the author's adaptation from Longfellow, "The Youngest Son" (page 100), if no longer play is given.

No. 8. If desired, no play need be given for this program, or one of the shorter, more modern plays from the list given below may be substituted.

CANDLE DRILL

X

FIRST CHILD (*lighting a candle*):

To God, the only One, we sing with might,
 Triumphant torches in His honor light,
 And, like their flames, our nation's prayers ascend,
 Grateful for His mercies without end.

SECOND CHILD:

And next to God, let us give praise to him,
 The valiant Maccabean, who withstood
 The foe of Israel, and her glory dim
 In victory's resplendent light renewed.

THIRD CHILD:

Three candles lit, as three years Israel
 Hath mourned and pined since Appollonius,
 Smooth mouthpiece of the cruel Antiochus,
 Proclaimed the law which moved us to rebel.

FOURTH CHILD:

When tyrant sword sought life, when tyrant hate oppressed,
 And Israel no safety knew, nor rest,
 But hounded still to the four corners of the earth,
 In caverns mourned her dead, and still Jehovah blest.

FIFTH CHILD:

Five candles glow, and fivefold glows our thanks
 To Mattathias' five most valiant sons,
 Who fired with zeal our all-disheartened ranks,
 Whose virtues brought Jehovah's benisons.

SIXTH CHILD:

This candle in reverent memory I light
 To our heroes, our martyrs, who fell in the flight;
 Even as day is led in by the glorious dawn,
 So their hero souls led to victory on.

SEVENTH CHILD:

The seventh candle, a memorial
 To Hannah's sainted children, those who fell
 First-offerings on the altar of the Lord,
 A sheaf of lilies cut by tyrant sword.

EIGHTH CHILD:

After the war, eager to sanctify
 Anew God's Temple, there of oil we found
 For the Menorah just a day's supply,
 Yet eight long days it shed its lustre round;
 Thus God the Lord hath wrought a wondrous deed
 In token that He never fails in need.

CHORUS:

He never faileth in the hour of need,
 Is ever in our midst—go where we may—
 Blessing all those that His commandments heed;
 He is our hope and refuge night and day.

From "Judas Maccabeus", by *Aaron Drucker*.

THE EIGHT CHANUKAH LIGHTS¹

With fervor and joy we give thanks to the Lord,
 And glory and praise to His name we accord,
 While we greet with great gladness this glorious night
 And piously kindle each Chanukah light.

To God who is One, and whose name is but One,
 We'll ever feel grateful for what He has done;
 When all our race was as dark as the night,
 Said the Guardian of Israel, "Let there be light!"

¹ To be recited as a drill for eight children, the first stanza in chorus, or as a recitation over the lights.

The Commandments God gave to our nation alone,
 Whose words were engraved on two tables of stone;
 And our people were chosen, with zeal and with might,
 To spread through the world the great heavenly light.

Our fathers most nobly have striven to be
 As true to their God as the patriarchs three,
 Whose faith was a star which was shining so bright
 That the gloom of the world was illumed by its light.

Four parts of the world—north, south, west and east—
 See the Israelites keeping the Chanukah feast,
 Who, just like ourselves, are performing the rite
 Of piously kindling each Chanukah light.

The five Hasmoncans, whose memory dear
 The sons of our people will ever revere,
 With the courage of heroes did fight for the right,
 And God's Temple they cleansed and rekindled the light.

Six days we must labor and do all our work,
 And woe unto him who his duty doth shirk!
 Though the battle of life is a hard one to fight,
 With heaven's assistance our task is made light.

When the seventh day comes, by God hallowed and blest,
 We should joyfully welcome the day of sweet rest,
 For our lives are made happy and rendered more bright
 By the joys of the Sabbath, its peace and its light.

May the eight days of Chanukah strengthen our mind
 To continue to labor for God and mankind,
 Till the day shall arrive when all men will unite
 To serve the one God and to walk in His light.

—Isidore Myers.

BEFORE A MENORAH

[To be recited by a child seated before a lighted Menorah a little to one side of the curtains which, when drawn, reveal the tableaux.]

In the candle rays I see
 Lovely pictures beckoning me:
 Judas, with his shield and sword, (1)
 Pledged to battle for the Lord.

Eleazar—steadfast, strong— (2)

'Mid the mocking heathen throng;
 Hannah, straight as candle's flame, (3)
 Sons who glorified her name.

Soldiers all, they smiled in pride; (4)

Glad and unafraid they died.
 God of Israel! may I be (5)
 A soldier worthy them and Thee!

—*Elma Ehrlich Levinger.*

TABLEAU 1. Judas in armor and sword, standing in heroic attitude.

TABLEAU 2. Eleazar, an old man dressed in flowing white garments, stands facing fearlessly a group of brightly-robed Syrians and several soldiers who hold drawn swords.

TABLEAU 3. Hannah, a stately woman in dark purple garments, her seven sons grouped around her, stands proudly before Antiochus. He is seated upon his throne and leans threateningly toward the group.

TABLEAU 4. The parted curtains show the above figures of the martyrs grouped together at one end of the stage; at the other the figure of Flame; a tall, regal figure, crowned

with laurel, stands before a large tablet in which she appears to inscribe their names.

TABLEAU 5. The same as "4", except that Fame stands facing the audience, while the reciter has risen, and speaks the last two lines with arms raised in invocation.

JUDAS MACCABEUS TO HIS SOLDIERS

O brothers, who have laid aside
 The ploughshare for the sword,
 Who gather from the hills and plains
 To battle for the Lord:
 If ye have hopes of honor,
 Or to reap wealth are fain,
 Serve not the cause of Israel,
 But seek your homes again.

I have no golden gifts to give,
 Our land is stripped and bare;
 Nor Grecian gauds and raiment rich—
 Behold the rags I wear!
 They sleep on ivory couches,
 The rocks must be your bed;
 Their tables groan with plenty,
 My men eat bitter bread.

No glories crown my faithful men,
 Who know the traitor's shame,
 Until they meet in Syrian courts
 The death I dare not name.
 My fighting hands are empty;
 My promises are grim;
 Yet ye who honor Israel's God
 Will pledge your swords to Him.

—*Elma Ehrlich Levinger.*

THE FEAST OF LIGHTS

Thrice welcome, glorious Feast of Light!
Thy presence we all feel,
And with our heart and soul and might
We greet thee now with zeal.

When chaos filled this world of ours,
And darkness black as night,
From out the depths His voice broke forth:
"Y'he Or!" There shall be light!

The light of Law became the guide
By which the worlds marched into space,
And suns and stars and seas joined in
To run Time's ceaseless race.

But lo! there stepped upon this earth
God's image breathed in man,
That he might prove the truth and worth
In Jehovah's perfect plan.

This light is but our very Soul
Which points the road that man must trod;
And glowing in his thought and deed
Shall lead him ever up to God.

Religion is the light of Love
Whose precious, golden rays
Shall scatter doubt and darkness
And brighten all our days.

The Maccabees this passion felt;
They battled bravely on,
That Life and Freedom may be held
From daylight until dawn.

Three cheers for that heroic band,
 Whose numbers few, though brave,
 Fought for their faith and fatherland
 And our religion saved.

Then hoist the banner of this day!
 Let cheerful voices chime!
 Let hate and anger flee away!
 God bless this light divine!

—*Mrs. Abram Simon.*

A CHANUKAH SONG

✕ Valor is yours, and strong desire
 To kindle the flame of your altar fire;
 Heroes of the old, and heroes now,
 Wreathing with laurels your noble brow;
 Victor in battle, strong and true—
 March on, a task is waiting you!

Sons of the Maccabees, hear the call
 Echoing aloud to you and all:
 Born amid this hilly land,
 Whose shrines are fouled by foeman's hand,
 Men of Judah, there's work to do—
 March on, a task is waiting you!

Brave as of old! Your fathers fought—
 Pilgrims who journeyed here and sought
 Freedom to labor; the right to be
 Known and loved as true and free:
 Sons of Judah, their souls imbue—
 March on, a task is waiting you! ✕

—*Joseph Leiser.*

SONG OF JUDAS MACCABEUS BEFORE THE BATTLE
OF MASPHEA

On, warriors and chiefs! Every step we have trod,
Though blood-stained with carnage and heaped with the slain,
Bear witness we fight for the glory of God,
Whose aid we have asked, nor entreated in vain.

Attest it you armies, whose glittering array
At noonday outshone in his splendor the sun,
Attest it ye proud-girded warriors, who lay
Unhonored and cold when the battle was done.

They came to subdue us. Oh, God of the just,
Thy arm was our shield, Thy protection our power;
Still aid and defend us, oh, Thou whom we trust,
In prosperity's pride and affliction's dark hour.

When we cease to remember the martyrs, whose blood .
They have poured out like water, may we be forgot;
When we cease to remember the fierce pangs they withstood,
May our strength be derided, our memory a blot.

Oh, falter not when their fierce, glittering host
Comes spreading destruction and blight o'er the land;
Remember proud Syria, how vain was her boast,
And firm be your hearts like the rocks where you stand.

Then on, can ye waver when Heaven's pure light
Smiles approvingly down on the path we have trod?
On! on! be it victory or death! ere the night
We have conquered or died for the glory of God.

—*Rebekah Hyneman.*

THE YOUNGEST SON

Characters: ANTIOCHUS; HANNAH; SIRION, her youngest son.

HANNAH (*alone before the curtain*):

Be strong, my heart! Break not till they are dead,
 All, all my seven sons; then burst asunder.
 I do not murmur; nay, I thank Thee, God,
 That I and mine have not been deemed unworthy
 To suffer for thy sake, and for Thy Law,
 And for the many sins of Israel. [*Approaches curtain.*]
 I can hear within the sound of scourges:
 I feel them ere than ye do, O my sons,
 But cannot come to you. I, who was wont
 To wake at night at the least cry ye made,
 To whom ye ran at every slightest hurt—
 I cannot take you now into my lap
 And soothe your pain; but God will take you all
 Into His pitying arms, and comfort you,
 And give you rest.

[*Enter ANTIOCHUS*]

Are they all dead?

ANTIOCHUS (*bidding SIRION follow him from behind the curtain*):

Of all thy seven sons one only lives.

HANNAH:

They have died a death so full of life
 That I ought rather to rejoice than mourn (*drawing SIRION to her*).

Wherefore art thou not dead, O Sirion?
 Wherefore art thou the only living thing
 Among thy brothers dead? Art thou afraid?

ANTIOCHUS:

O woman, I have spared him for thy sake,
For he is fair to look upon and comely;
And I have sworn to him by all the gods
That I would crown his life with joy and honor,
Heap treasures on him, luxuries, delights,
Make him my friend and keeper of my secrets,
If he would turn from your Mosaic law
And be as we are—but he will not listen.
Therefore I beseech thee,
Who art his mother, thou wouldst speak with him,
And wouldst persuade him. I am sick of blood.

HANNAH:

Yea, I will speak with him and will persuade him.
O Sirion, my son, have pity on me,
Who fed and nourished thee, and brought thee up
With the dear trouble of a mother's care
Unto this age. If thou art grateful, Sirion,
If thou dost love me—fear not this tormentor,
But, being worthy of thy brethren, take
Thy death as they did—be thy mother's son,
And die as bravely as thy brothers died.

ANTIOCHUS:

I am mocked; yea, I am laughed to scorn!

SIRION:

Whom wait ye for?
Never will I obey the king's commandment,
But the commandment of the ancient Law,
That was by Moses given unto our fathers,
And thou, O godless man, that of all others
Art most wicked, be not lifted up,
Nor puffed with uncertain hopes, uplifting
Thy hand against the servants of the Lord,
For thou hast not escaped the righteous judgment
Of the Almighty God, who seeth all things!

ANTIOCHUS:

He is no God of mine: I fear him not.

SIRION:

My brothers, who have suffered a brief pain,
Are dead; but thou, Antiochus, shalt suffer
The punishment of pride. I offer up
My body and my life, beseeching God
That He would speedily be merciful
Unto our nation.

ANTIOCHUS:

Ye shall both perish.

HANNAH:

My Sirion, I am proud of thee.

ANTIOCHUS:

Be silent!
Go to thy bed of torture in yon chamber,
Where lie so many sleepers—heartless mother!
Thy footsteps will not wake them, nor thy voice,
Nor wilt thou hear, amid thy troubled dreams,
Thy children crying for thee in the night!

(Exit ANTIOCHUS behind curtains)

HANNAH:

O Death, that stretchest thy white hands to me,
I fear them not, but press them to my lips,
That are as white as thine; for I am Death;
Nay, am the mother of Death, seeing these sons
All lying lifeless. Come, my Sirion!

(They pass behind the curtain)

Adapted from Longfellow's "JUDAS MACCABEUS".

by Elma Ehrlich Levinger.

MODEL PROGRAM FOR CHANUKAH

III

- 1. Opening Song, "WHERE JUDAH'S FAITHFUL SONS
ARE FOUND", Union Hymnal 193.....*School*
- 2. Essay, THE MEANING OF CHANUKAH,
Intermediate or Senior
- 3. Musical number.
- 4. Play, "LIGHT OF ISRAEL".....*Intermediates and Seniors*
- 5. Closing Song, "ROCK OF AGES", Union Hymnal
189 *School*

VARIATIONS

Instead of No. 3, any of the following recitations may be given: "The Banner of the Jew" (page 104); "Chanukah Hymn" (page 105); "The Jewish Warrior" (page 106); "Chanukah" (page 106).

THE BANNER OF THE JEW

Wake, Israel, wake! Recall today
The glorious Maccabean rage,
The sire heroic, hoary-gray,
His fivefold lion lineage:
The Wise, the Elect, the Help-of-God,
The Burst-of-Spring, the Avenging Rod.

From Mizpah's mountain-ridge they saw
Jerusalem's empty streets, her shrine
Laid waste, where Greeks profaned the Law
With idol and with pagan sign.
Mourners in tattered black were there
With ashes sprinkled on their hair.

Then from the stony peak there rang
A blast to ope the graves; down poured
The Maccabean clan, who sang
Their battle-anthem to the Lord.
Five heroes lead, and following, see,
Ten thousand rush to victory!

Oh, for Jerusalem's trumpet now,
To blow a blast of shattering power,
To wake the sleepers, high and low,
And rouse them to the urgent hour!
No hand for vengeance—but to save
A million naked swords should wave.

Oh, deem not dead that martial fire,
Say not the mystic flame is spent!
With Moses' law and David's lyre,
Your ancient strength remains unbent.
Let but an Ezra rise anew
To lift the banner of the Jew!

A rag—a mock at first—ere long,
When men have bled and women wept
To guard its precious folds from wrong,
Even they who shrunk, even they who slept,
Shall leap to bless it and to save.
Strike! for the brave revere the brave!

—*Emma Lazarus.*

CHANUKAH HYMN .

+

Lord, the true that follow Thee
Beam in vict'ry's radiant light,
Fill'd their hearts with joyous glee
Even in the darkest night.

Roaring billows, wild and fleet,
Onward pressed the enemy's band;
Israel's remnant, Jacob's seat,
How wilt thou their might withstand?

Rise ye heroes, rise to fight
For your standard, truth divine,
Not by numbers nor by might,
By His spirit ye shall shine.

And inspired by such appeal
Every man to hosts increased;
And they fought with holy zeal
Till the tyrant-hold released.

Lord, Thy truth, Thy holy love,
Is our cherished banner still;
And in faith for evermore
Thy command we follow will. ✓

—*Adolph Huebsch.*

THE JEWISH WARRIOR

Come, you gold-braided generals and admirals,
 Who told you blood is the sign of struggle?
 Who told you struggle must mean destruction?
 Who told you strugglers wear uniforms?
 Who told you battles are fought by *you*?

Come, you bold commanders, skilled in war,
 And I will show you a well-planned struggle,
 The most astounding earth has seen,
 Making your shining brigades look foolish,
 And your smart cavalcades a derision!

Come, put your heads together,
 Look in thru the broken window-pane,
 Crowd around the low-thatched house;
 What do you see?

Only a hoary old man,
 Reading with his sorrow-shaded eyes
 In a moldy, time-worn book,
 Before two candles.

(From "*Pain—Struggle*".) *H. Segal.*

CHANUKAH

✕ The hand of Time moves o'er the dial,
 And guides the seasons through the year;
 It drives the sorrow from our hearts—
 Behold—the Feast of Lights is here!

The Feast of Lights—old mem'ries stir,
 And pride within our breast soars high,
 We live again in ancient days,
 When Judah's glory was the cry.

We see the Maccabees of old
Bow low within the house of God,
Where Syrian hands defiled the halls,
Where Israel's patriarch had trod.

Now light we tapers for their deeds,
Awak'ning in each heart a prayer
That we may, like the Maccabees,
The glory and the valor share.

The Feast of Lights—a time when hope
Throws off the yoke of sorrow's rod,
To wing its way above the flames
That leap to glory and to God! †

—Cecelia G. Gerson.

PURIM

PURIM IN THE CLASS-ROOM

IT IS to be understood that a great many of the following suggestions will be found practical only in larger schools with a full quota of classes of every age, although in some cases several classes may be combined. Again, the more elaborate handwork may take up too much of the time assigned for class-room recitation, and will have to be completed by the children either at home or at special meetings set aside for the purpose. But every grade can co-operate and be made to feel responsible for its share in the Purim entertainment.

The *story* should be told in every class, with special emphasis upon the features most acceptable to the listeners. The story should be carefully reviewed by the teacher, who will decide which points she wishes to bring out to her hearers, and, if they belong to the Intermediate or Senior Divisions, what additional material they will be able to grasp. If a play is to be given, it is a wise thing for the teachers to know its story that she may use it for illustrative material, doubling its value for the children when they see the performance. If a modern comedy like a "Sick Purim" is given, she may tell something of masking for the festival and the old-time custom of the strolling Purim Players; while even the little ones may prefer to send their gifts to an orphan asylum if they

hear the play will tell the story of orphan children. Should the "Star of Judah" be given, the Seniors may be interested to discuss such questions as how the Jews first came under Persian rule and the identity of the Ahasuerus of the story. Haman's charges in the second act may be read and compared with charges brought against the Jew of our own day.

Class-room dramatization will prove a delight to the Primary children. Tell the story very briefly, picking out the characters as you mention them. Let the children act out the tale, using their own words for dialogue and avoiding prompting as much as possible. With children of the Intermediate Division it is often a delightful exercise to discuss the story at length; plan with them what episodes would make good scenes in a play and assign the dramatization of the story for the next lesson. In this way the author has received really creditable little sketches, both modern and ancient, based upon the Purim festival.

For the Primary children, coloring pictures from the story, such as Mordecai riding upon his horse, is always a treat. They may also cut and paste pictures, or sew them with bright wool when an easy outline is pricked on cardboard. All of them will be able to string beads worn by the characters in the play; those far enough advanced in their school work may be trained to cut characteristic silhouettes to trim the posters announcing the program. Cut-out objects for Purim—a crown, a mask and a Shalach Monoth box—are on sale at Bloch Publishing Company, New York City, and can be purchased for a trifling sum. The

crowns and masks can be worn for a Purim party or masquerade; the boxes are just the thing for the children to fill with candy as Purim gifts for children less fortunate than themselves.

The children of the Intermediate and Senior Divisions may often be held responsible for the properties, and in some cases the costumes, explicit directions being given in the class-room and the work being done either at home or in their own clubs. Teachers sometimes complain that "it is more work to show the children than to do the work myself." But it is one of the author's proudest memories that she obtained her first control over the star-bad-boy of his class as she labored with him over the shaky loom that the handmaiden used in the "Star of Judah".

Parties and Masquerades are often one of the best ways of celebrating the festival, especially when a program is out of the question. But there is a little edification or point in giving parties to children often surfeited from the pleasures of dancing school and the picture show. If a party is given, the children should do at least a tiny share toward making it a success, if only to make their own costumes. Elaborate hired costumes for the masquerade should be tabu, each teacher planning with her class what each member will wear and helping them devise them out of material on hand or the ever-useful crepe paper. If this is done, the pernicious habit of awarding a prize to any individual child may be abolished, the class presenting the best appearance on the whole receiving a banner or some similar token.

The refreshments should be simple, the decorations likewise. There should be games¹ and dancing, and, if desired, a very short program. Several musical numbers by the children themselves, and the Esther Pantomime, given with the other program material in the Appendix, should be ample. If the pantomime is given the children may wear their masquerade costumes; it is performed behind a sheet, and care should be taken lest the children crowd too closely together, thus spoiling the picture.

But the party becomes really worth while when it is given for somebody else. If the old Jewish custom of remembering joy days by giving charity is recalled, the party may take the form of a Shalach Monoth. In no case should the children have their own pleasure before even the littlest ones of the Primary Department have contributed their share toward some local children's charity. However, if it is at all possible, they should give the party themselves. In a large school this might mean overcrowding, but the difficulty could be overcome by allowing either the Intermediate Division or the Seniors to act as hosts to children of their own age.

Here again caution must be exercised, or the attempt to teach our children the principle of Jewish charity becomes a farce. A certain Lady Bountiful once decided that her class of confirmands should entertain a dozen children from the Home for the Friendless for Purim. She took up a collection from her pupils—pitifully small when one considered how

¹ Some excellent Purim games devised by Rabbi Harold F. Reinhart will be found after Purim Program III. "A Set of Purim Games" especially suitable for clubs is now on sale by Young Judea.

much they spent for their own personal pleasures—and appointed a committee to purchase the refreshments and favors. The committee bought lavishly, and Lady Bountiful footed the extra bill, teased them for their extravagance, and spent the afternoon of the party chatting with several friends in a corner of the vestry room, making no attempt to teach her pupils how to entertain their guests.

On the other hand, a certain Sabbath School superintendent persuaded his children to give a much simpler Purim party than usual that they could afford to ask a few guests from the Orphanage. The children made the favors themselves, and the money brought for ice cream represented real sacrifices on their parts, while the guests went home each carrying one of the pupil's favorite books or toys.

The idea of Shalach Monoth may be carried out in many ways, such as gifts of fruit and flowers for the hospitals, scrap-books made by the Primary children for the children's ward, etc. And if the giver is taught to give himself with his gift, perhaps the revival of at least one Purim custom will be justified.

Not only plays, as was suggested earlier, but Purim stories may be written. It has been found in some cases to stimulate interest in the observances of the holiday by having a story contest for the children of the Intermediate and Senior Divisions, giving two prizes for the two best stories from these groups which deal with the plot connected with Purim. Or a poem or essay may be substituted, the two prize-winning stories, essays or poems being read at the public program by the successful contestants.

In telling the Purim story, especially to older children, the teacher will find supplementary legends as well as modern stories very valuable for stimulating interest. Many of the stories in the appended list will be found good for supplementary reading, should the teacher find no time for them in the class-room. For the teacher, Ginzberg's "Legends of the Jews" (Jewish Publication Society) is especially helpful if she has any skill in adapting and expanding a story.

STORIES ABOUT PURIM

FOR INTERMEDIATES

Modern

"A MODERN ESTHER" from "*A Modern Esther*". Emily Goldsmith Gerson (Greenstone).

"THE PURIM PUSSY" from "*Jewish Holyday Stories*". Elma Ehrlich Levinger (Bloch).

"THE FESTIVAL" from "*Festival Stories of Child Life in a Jewish Colony*". Hannah Trager (Dutton).

Biblical

"IN SHUSHAN THE CAPITAL" from "*David the Giant Killer*". Emily Solis-Cohen (Jewish Pub. Soc.).

FOR SENIORS

Modern

"ESTHER" from "*Jewish Children*". Sholom Aleichem (trans. by *Berman*). (Knopf.)

"THE PURIM PLAYERS" from "*In Many Lands*". Elma Ehrlich Levinger (Bloch).

Biblical

"THE SPRIG OF MYRTLE" from "*Playmates in Egypt*". Elma Ehrlich Levinger (Jewish Pub. Soc.).

REFERENCES FOR OLDER CHILDREN

Article "PURIM" and related articles in Jewish Encyclopedia and the Book of Esther.

No piecemeal references should be given to the latter; when the child is able to read it through he should be given the splendidly written narrative in its complete form.

THE PURIM PROGRAM

In preparing the Program, one "Don't" looms above all others: "Don't make it too long." Few programs suffer from brevity; many a really fine program has been almost ruined because the audience toward the end grew surfeited with too many excellent numbers.

This warning, which appears more than once between the covers of this volume, should be especially heeded on Purim, when the central feature of the entertainment is usually a full-length play.

Nothing can be a greater mistake than the belief that a number of short selections are less tiresome than one sustained number. Two or three successive recitations or musical numbers, no matter how well performed, have been known to drive an audience into boredom, where a carefully arranged set of tableaux interspersed by appropriate descriptive songs or recitations is likely to hold the interest for a longer period. An ideal afternoon program for children should last about an hour and a half, an evening one about an hour.

There should be no long speeches by visitors interested in the Sabbath School; anyone invited to address the pupils should be reminded tactfully but forcefully that the children are anxious to get to their program. If the rabbi feels the holiday cannot pass unless he tells the old story, which should have been

told in the class-room, let him make it as brief as possible. The chairman who announces the numbers should limit his remarks to the information which the audience needs—which should be supplied to him in writing before the program begins.

Every detail of the program should be carefully worked out, as the author has already urged in the opening pages. When a program of proper length has been drawn up and approved, the director should turn a deaf ear to any suggestion that little Marjorie expects to give her sailor's hornpipe or the Stein child always recites on Purim. Try to pick out separate numbers which fit in with the central idea of the holiday—and let nothing disturb its unity, whether it be the ceremonial, ethical or historical aspect of the festival.

The question of grading the entertainment has already been discussed. If possible, the recitations and songs should be in the hands of the younger children, who may also be called upon to take the part of little children in the play or tableaux. The children of the Intermediate and Senior groups should present the play and the recitations requiring more grasp and insight than can be expected of the younger pupils.

In alternating the program, it is always a good plan to keep the needs of the older divisions in mind. In the first two programs presented in the following pages it will be seen that the first is considerably lighter in tone, dealing chiefly with the folk aspects of the holiday. It should have especial appeal for the Intermediate children, and, if desired, no Seniors need be used. The second program, with its emphasis on

the historical aspects of the holiday, can be put into the hands of the Senior pupils. In both cases, it should be the aim of the director to keep the shorter numbers in harmony with the spirit of the central feature of the program.

It is generally advisable to use a play as the center of the Purim program. The days are past when the slogan for juvenile entertainments seemed to be, "anything is good enough for children". The play should be chosen with the greatest of care; in many cases judicious adapting will make it more suitable for the group who are to present it. Often a play that is hopelessly long and involved goes well when cut down to a few essential scenes. Be sure to place it near the end of the program for the sake of the climax—also to allow enough time to assemble and dress the cast.

Singing by the school pupils should be made a feature of every program, if only to make every child feel that he is having a share in the performance. In some cases the program can consist entirely of musical numbers in addition to a pageant or group of tableaux, as in the third program presented here.

It is well to remember in this connection that nothing is more grateful to a Sabbath School audience than variety; for this reason, whenever possible, it is best to adapt the recitations; have them given by a child in appropriate costume or divided among several children. This is especially good for a long recitation which might otherwise grow monotonous, such as "A Purim Retrospect".

Should the material given in the following model programs not prove acceptable, additional available

material will be found in the list of plays and recitations. For it has been the aim of the author to make these programs as flexible as possible, trusting to the ingenuity of the director to evolve an ideal Purim entertainment from the resources of his own school with one unifying, underlying motif for the festival in mind.

Whenever possible, have a printed program, which saves confusion and delights the actors and their families. A characteristic design may be used, such as a comic mask or Purim rattle. These symbols, cut from black paper by the Primary department, may be pasted upon posters used to announce the entertainment.

Upon these posters and upon the programs it is always effective to have a suitable quotation. Quotations from the Book of Esther are especially appropriate (see 9:20), or if verse is desired, one of the following may be found acceptable:

BLESSING ON PURIM

To be printed below a picture of a child reading the Scroll of Esther.

Blessed art Thou, O God, our King,
The Lord of life and everything,
Whose word has hallowed Israel's soul
And bade us read Queen Esther's scroll;
(Because her courage and her faith,
When God had pity in old days,
In exile saved us all from death
And let us live to sing His praise).

Jessie E. Sampter ("AROUND THE YEAR IN RHYMES").

PURIM

Purim is with us at last, and again comes the wonderful day,
Bringing us memories we cherish, and bidding all cares pass
away;

Telling of memories our people won without bloodshed and
war,

Showing how noble our heroes, how great is the God we
adore!

From "THE PURIM PLAYERS", by *Samuel S. Grossman*.

PLAYS FOR PURIM

INTERMEDIATE DIVISION.....*Modern*

"*A Sick Purim*". Elma Ehrlich Levinger. (Published with this volume),

for which may be substituted

"*Miriam's Purim Play*", four boys, six girls; minor characters; easy to present; suitable for small, informal entertainment. Ruth Levi Wolf. (Bloch.)

"*The Purim Basket*", two boys, six girls; very slight; could be coached by an older pupil. Emily Goldsmith Gerson. (Bloch.)

"*Casting of Lots*", seven boys, three girls (girls may take some of the boys' parts); minor characters; a very successful farce which the children always enjoy presenting. Abraham Burstein. (Young Judea.)

"*The Purim Players*", eight boys, five girls (parts may be changed); minor characters; a delightful comedy with music; a few of the characters presenting the Purim story. Samuel S. Grossman. (Young Judea.)

"*A Dream of Purim*", nine males, three females; a bright little version of the old story. Abraham Burstein (Young Judea.)

SENIOR DIVISION.....*Historical*

"*Star of Judah*". Elma Ehrlich Levinger. (Published with this volume.)

"*Pageant of Esther*". Elma Ehrlich Levinger. (Published with this volume.)

for which may be substituted

"*Esther the Queen*", twelve boys, eight girls; minor characters; interesting historical pictures. Leon H. Elmaleh. (Bloch.)

"*Esther the Jewish Queen*", four boys, three girls; minor characters; excellent for those desiring a short historical play. Edward M. Chapman. (Bloch.)

"*Haman's Conspiracy*", thirteen boys, two girls; minor characters; a lively drama with music; effective, but requires careful coaching. Henry Woolf. (Bloch.)

"*Esther, Queen of Persia*", six boys, three girls; minor characters; several of the scenes could be omitted if a shorter play is desired. Janie Jacobson. (Bloch.)

NOTE: Several of these plays are out of print, but it is hoped a new edition will appear shortly. "*The Purim Songster*" by A. W. Binder (Bloch) should be found extremely valuable in preparing a miscellaneous program.

MODEL PROGRAM FOR PURIM

I

[Carried out chiefly by the Primary and Intermediate Divisions.]

1. Song, "EN KELOHENU".....*Entire School*
2. Prologue, "MY BASKET".....*Eight Little Girls*
3. Essay, "OLD PURIM CUSTOMS".....*Senior Pupil*
4. Song, Hymn 193, Union Hymnal.....*Entire School*
5. Recitation, "SONNY'S PURIM".....*Intermediate Pupil*
6. A Set of Purim Pictures.....*Intermediate Pupils*
7. Dance of the Purim Jesters.....*Primary Pupils*
8. Recitation, "ESTHER BEFORE THE KING"....*Senior Girl*
9. Song, Hymn 194, Union Hymnal.....*Entire School*
10. Play, "A SICK PURIM".....*Intermediate Pupils*
11. Song, "STAR-SPANGLED BANNER".....*Entire School*

VARIATIONS

For the Prologue, No. 2, the director may substitute "An Old-Fashioned Purim" (page 381).

For No. 5, the short recitation, "A Purim Wish" (page 134).

If a shorter program is desired, No. 6 may be substituted for the play, or dropped entirely.

For No. 8, the recitation, "A Purim Harlequinade" (page 135); "Maid of Persia" (page 136); "Purim" (page 137); "Hadassah" (page 140), or "About Purim" (page 139).

PURIM PROLOGUE—"MY BASKET"

[Before the curtain is drawn a little girl, in her hat and coat and carrying a basket covered with a white cloth, enters and bows to the audience. Her entire speech must be given with a merry sprightliness of manner. She is followed by seven smaller girls in white dresses who constantly tease her, trying to peep into the basket, etc.]

GIRL (*with basket*):

Good Purim, dear children! My greetings to you;
Now, don't pull—I can't linger—I've got so much to do,
For mother just gave me this basket, you know,
And "'Tis Purim", said mother. "I want you to go
To all Jewish children, and tell them for me
That I've put in your basket"—(*she pretends to uncover it,*
then laughs roguishly and puts it behind her)—

Don't you wish you could see
What my basket contains? 'Tis a gift gay and bright,
But I know you won't guess—though you try hard all night.

OTHERS (*crowding eagerly*):

Let's see what you have brought us.

[She shakes her head smilingly, but after they have teased her she uncovers the basket. They peep in, then turn away looking much disappointed. Girl laughs and comes forward, addressing the audience.]

They didn't like my mother's gift;
I'll show you in a minute
The lovely present I have brought —

[Shows the basket laughingly to the audience. It is empty. The other girls come back, several half crying, and speak in indignant chorus.]

OTHERS:

You know there's nothing in it!

GIRL (*to audience*):

Ha, ha, ha! I've fooled you, too!

[*To others*]: Don't cry! I'll tell you what I'll do:

Although I've brought no gift in that [*points to basket*]

I'll give you something from my hat!

[*She takes twelve red cardboard letters from beneath her large hat and scatters them upon the ground. The seven children pretend to scramble for them; each finds her letter—already agreed upon—the last child pretending to pout because only one is left, and stand in a row to form the word SH AL AC HM ON OT H*]

GIRL (*to audience*):

Our program is the gift I bring:

For you we'll act and dance and sing;

We'll show you Esther and the king,

We'll show you Haman, cruel and sly,

And noble, loyal Mordecai.

We'll dance and prance with Purim toys [*girls wave their rattles*]

Until you're weary of our noise;

We'll sing you songs of Purim cheer—

[*with sweeping bow*] This is our present, children dear.

[*All run off merrily*]

—Elma Ehrlich Levinger.

SONNY'S PURIM

[*To be recited by a girl clever enough to suggest the voice of the child and his mother.*]

"What's a Purim?" Sonny said,

As I tucked him in his bed;

(Sonny, who'll be three in spring,

Thinks I know just everything!)

So I sat upon his bed;

"Purim is the day", I said,

When we tell how Esther brave
 Saved her people from the grave;
 How to Mordecai the king
 Gave his royal signet ring,
 Saying, 'This I give to you—
 Save the life of every Jew.' ”

Sonny said: “Yes, yes, I know.
 But this happened long ago;
 We keep Purim—can't you say
 What our people do today?”
 “For our party Grandma makes
Homontaschen, Purim cakes.
 We will dance and we will sing,
 Brother Joe will play the king;
 Sister will be Purim's queen,
 Ben as Haman will be seen;
 And they'll act the Purim story
 Which still rings with Israel's glory.”

Sonny sighed: “I'd like to sing
 Or dance, or play I was a king.”
 But I tucked him warm in bed,
 Kissed him hard, and laughing, said:
 “Not this year—when you grow tall
 And old as Joe, you'll play them all;
 But just be good, and I'll give you
 A drum and a big gregar, too.
 That you, the littlest of boys,
 May drown the others with your noise.”
 Sonny chirped from his warm nest:
 “I like the noisy part the best!”

—*Elma Ehrlich Levinger.*

A SET OF PURIM PICTURES

TEN TABLEAUX TELLING THE CHIEF EVENTS OF THE
PURIM STORYArranged by *Elma Ehrlich Levinger*

[NOTE—In presenting the following tableaux, great care should be exercised to have one tableau follow another as quickly as possible. Each picture should be shown to the audience as long as the “Reader” continues to give the explanatory remarks. A child with a clear, strong voice, should be chosen for the part of the “Reader”; he should be dressed as a scribe, and read his lines from an open scroll. If desired, appropriate music may be played during the scenes.]

PICTURE I

[DESCRIPTION: *The two conspirators, Bigthan and Teresh, are shown plotting together near the front of the stage, while Mordecai stands behind them listening, showing his horror at their words.*]

READER: Two of the king’s chamberlains plotted to slay the king, Ahasuerus. But Mordecai overheard them and warned the king, and saved his life.

[*An appropriate poem could be recited instead of this reading, and similarly with the others.*]

PICTURE II (a)

[DESCRIPTION: *Vashti, dressed in her queenly robes, her royal maidens about her, is shown standing in an attitude of haughty refusal before the king’s messenger, who bows before her.*]

READER: Ahasuerus, the king, commanded the queen, Vashti, to appear before him as he feasted with his princes. But Vashti would not appear before him and his drunken court.

PICTURE II (b)

[DESCRIPTION: *Vashti's royal maidens are shown cowering near the door in attitudes of terror. The messenger stands ready to depart, Vashti's crown and queenly robes in his hands. Vashti lies upon her couch weeping.*]

READER: So the king, Ahasuerus, commanded that Vashti's crown and royal estate be taken from her and that she should no longer be his queen.

PICTURE III

[DESCRIPTION: *Esther, dressed in simple robes, is shown clinging to Mordecai, who is gently putting her from him. At a little distance stands the royal messenger. In one hand he holds the king's royal proclamation; with the other he points toward the entrance.*]

READER: Then the king sent a decree throughout the kingdom bidding the fairest maidens of Persia appear before him, and his messenger came to the house of Mordecai. And there dwelt with him his cousin Esther, who was like his own child.

PICTURE IV

[DESCRIPTION: *This scene has pantomime instead of tableau. Ahasuerus is shown seated upon his throne with his court about him. Mordecai in the background. The maidens pass one by one before him; Esther comes last; he signs for her to pause, comes to her, takes her hand, places her upon the throne beside him, and sets a crown upon her head. All kneel to pay her reverence except Mordecai, who stands with his face covered with his cloak.*]

READER: From all the maidens in the land of Persia, Ahasuerus the king chose Esther for his bride. And he crowned her in the sight of all the people, and made her his queen instead of Vashti.

PICTURE V (a)

[DESCRIPTION: *Mordecai is shown seated upon the ground, looking quietly at Haman, who, his attendants grouped about him, stands in a threatening attitude.*]

READER: And all the king's servants bowed down to Haman, but Mordecai bowed not down. And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not down, then was Haman full of wrath.

PICTURE V (b)

[DESCRIPTION: *Haman and several of his attendants are shown kneeling down before an urn from which Haman has drawn a lot.*]

READER: And Haman sought to destroy not only Mordecai, but his people also, even the Jews. And he cast lots, for he wished to set a day on which to slay them.

PICTURE VI

[DESCRIPTION: *Ahasuerus is shown seated upon his throne; Haman kneels before him to receive his signet ring.*]

READER: And Haman said to the king: There is a certain people scattered throughout thy realm who keep not thy laws. Why should they live? And the king took the ring from his hand and gave it to Haman, saying: Do to this people as it seemeth good to thee.

PICTURE VII

[DESCRIPTION: *Ahasuerus is shown lying upon his couch, while a scribe sits before him reading from a large scroll.*]

READER: On that night could not the king sleep; and he commanded them to bring the Book of the Chronicles, and they were read to him, and he heard how that Mordecai, whom he had forgotten, had saved him from death.

PICTURE VII (a)

[DESCRIPTION: *Mordecai is shown pleading with Esther, who stands with her face hidden, weeping.*]

READER: And Mordecai said to Esther: For this wast thou made queen, that thou mightest plead with the king for thy people and save them. But she was afraid.

[VI and VII may be combined, as VI(a) and (b)]

PICTURE VII (b)

[DESCRIPTION: *Mordecai stands with his hands extended in gratitude to Esther. Her head is thrown back; her whole attitude expresses courage and determination.*]

READER: Then Esther said: Although it may be death for me to appear before the king, yet will I go before him and plead for my people. And if I perish, I perish.

PICTURE VIII

[DESCRIPTION: *Ahasuerus sits upon his throne surrounded by his court. He has extended his scepter, which Esther holds as she kneels before him.*]

READER: But Ahasuerus the king extended his scepter to Esther and asked her her request. And she answered him: Let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I have prepared for them.

PICTURE IX

[DESCRIPTION: *Ahasuerus stands looking sternly at Haman, who cowers before Esther.*]

READER: And Esther said unto the king: This is the man who would slay my people, the Jews and slay me also.

PICTURE X

[DESCRIPTION: *Ahasuerus is shown upon the throne with Esther beside him. He is giving his ring to Mordecai. About them stand others in festal dress.*]

READER: Then Ahasuerus the king gave his ring unto Mordecai and bade him protect the Jews that they should not die. And there was a day of rejoicing and gladness, and the Jews had rest from their enemies.

[If desired, a song of rejoicing may be sung after the Reader's lines.]

DANCE OF THE PURIM JESTERS

This dance can be given by any number of girls and boys, or by either girls or boys alone. However, it is much prettier to use an equal number of both, the little girls wearing short frilled skirts of red and yellow, the little boys the conventional jesters' suits of red and yellow, all wearing the cap with bells and carrying huge Purim rattles which they shake throughout the dance. Dennison's crepe paper may be made to suggest the costumes.

In most cases, a search among the younger pupils will reveal enough dancers who have already learned a suitable dance in dancing school or kindergarten. Any variation of the familiar Jester or Teddy Bear Dance can be used.

If it is impossible to find enough children who know the dance, it may be given as a solo dance by a little girl in appropriate costume.

ESTHER BEFORE THE KING

[For a girl in one of the higher classes]

When darkest clouds o'erwhelmed our hapless race,
And Persia's king decreed the Jews must die,
A star arose to comfort those who wept—
Esther, the foster-child of Mordecai.

Within his quiet home the maiden grew,
The sweet-souled Myrtle, fair of form and face;
Each year her beauty bloomed as doth a flower,
Secluded, lovely in that lonely place.

And when the king's command brought to his court
 The loveliest maidens, none so fair was seen;
 Thus Esther, from her lowly Jewish home,
 Was raised to shine upon his throne—a queen.

In the fair palace Esther dwelt a queen,
 Until there came to her the dreadful cry:
 "The Jews, thy people, perish! Save us now
 Or we through Haman's hate must surely die."

Her childlike heart grew chill with dreadful fear;
 She was so young, and it seemed hard to die;
 When, "If I perish for my people's sake,
 I perish!"—was her undismayed reply.

She stood before the king, star-bright and fair;
 He granted mercy to her troubled race;
 Haman, the hated, straight was doomed to death
 And Mordecai succeeded to his place.

And though the weary centuries roll between,
 Still doth the memory cherish Esther brave,
 The Jewish girl who wore the Persian crown,
 And shone a Star to comfort and to save.

—*Elma Ehrlich Levinger.*

A PURIM WISH

I'd like to be the mighty king
 Who ruled o'er Persia—with a ring
 To sign decrees for all the land,
 And none to question my command!

I wish that I were Mordecai,
 In Persia's court to sit so high—
 The favorite of king and queen,
 The tower on which my brethren lean!

I'd even be that wicked wretch,
Haman, the vile, who thought to stretch
His sword o'er all our people's host,
And then of Israel's downfall boast!

I would—but then my teachers say,
Since I'm a girl, this Purim day
The Esther part to me must fall,
And I can't play a man at all!

—*Abraham Burstein.*

A PURIM HARLEQUINADE

[*For an Intermediate Pupil*]

They were old pals of a merry crew
And toured a town around,
A-piping tunes of merriment
For every one they found.

Tum trum; tum trum tum, (*fingering a fiddle*)
Hi diddle, diddle doe;
Who has no laughter in his soul
Lives all the year in woe.

Like pipers come from Hamlin town,
They set all folks agog,
Induced to join these roysterers
In their fantastic jog.

Tum trum tum; tum trum tum, (*with fiddle*)
Hi diddle, diddle doe;
Who cannot dance on Purim Day
Lives all the year in woe.

Now old and young, and rich and poor,
All heard this quaint refrain,
And leaning out from casement sills
Bade them return again.

Tum trum tum; tum trum tum, (*with fiddle*)
 Hi diddle, diddle doe;
 Who does not sing when men are gay
 Lives all the year in woe.

So every March, when spring winds blow
 The northland frosts away,
 There come these troopers in its wake,
 A-hailing Purim Day.

Tum trum tum; tum trum tum, (*with fiddle*)
 Hi diddle, diddle doe;
 Who is not merry Purim Day
 Lives all the year in woe.

—*Joseph Leiser.*

MAID OF PERSIA

Maid of Persia, Myrtle named,
 For thy graces rightly famed—
 Esther, ours for evermore,
 Queen today from oldest yore—
 Ere we leave thee, let thy grace
 Linger with us for a space.

Israel's maidens be like thee,
 Holding fast fidelity
 To the cause of Israel,
 That they yield not to the spell
 Of the glitter and the gold
 Shining in another fold.

Oh, our hearts are thine today
 For the dread thou did'st allay,
 For the plot of Haman foiled,
 That our race was not despoiled,
 For the worth of Mordecai
 Who the plotters did defy.

Let thy spirit be our share
Through whatever lands we fare;
Mordecai and Esther be
Lord and queen eternally
In the hearts of man and maid,
Making Israel unafraid.

Of "the foe that stalks by night,
Of the fowler's luring might,"
Of the envy and the hate
Which all centuries relate—
Maid of Juda, daughter dear,
Be thy spirit ever near.

—*Harry Weiss.*

PURIM

From Shushan's royal palace came the edict dread and dark:
"Exterminate God's chosen race, crush out life's vital spark."
This heard the youth and trembled, and the hoary head was
bowed,
And in sackcloth and in ashes the faithful mourned aloud.

But lo! a maiden standeth now in royal garments dressed,
Though on her youthful brow a crown—'tis sadness fills her
breast;
The king upon his royal throne beholds that maiden fair,
The golden scepter holdeth forth, and calls Queen Esther
there.

"What wilt thou, oh, Queen Esther? And what is thy behest?
Though e'en 'twere half my kingdom, it should be at thy re-
quest."

Then gently spake the maiden, as she stands in beauty there:
"Let the king and Haman come to-day to the banquet I pre-
pare."

While thus with joy they feasted, and the wine cup held on
 high,
 Again the king on Esther urged to tell her thoughts—and
 why
 Upon her brow a shadow dark had cast its gloom this day,
 But with a smile, then, Esther spake, and courage found to
 say:

“If I have pleased my lord the king, and found grace in his
 eyes,
 I beg that he will not refuse, or my request despise,
 And that once more, to-morrow, when a banquet I prepare,
 The king and Haman shall again, with wine and song, be
 there;
 And then shall my petition before the king be laid,
 And if 'tis granted, not in vain hath Esther, fasting, prayed.”

'Tis night! and though on royal couch Ahasuerus now lies,
 He vainly wooes the god of sleep to close his weary eyes.
 “Bring in the chronicled events,” the king now gives com-
 mand,
 “And thus amuse my waking thoughts with actions, as they
 stand.”

Then heard the king how Mordecai his life from ruffians
 spared;

“What honor hath been done for this?” “Yet nothing”, they
 declared.

Then asked the king of Haman, “What shall in reward be
 done

To him who hath my royal grace and honor justly won?”

And when the monarch heard, he cried, “Take Mordecai the
 Jew,

And all the honors thou hast planned, make haste thee quick
 to do.”

Now at the second banquet, Queen Esther makes request:

“I ask my life from out thy hand, my people at bequest.

"For we are sold! both I and they; not for bondmen o'er
the land,
But utterly to be destroyed, cast out, and slain, 'tis planned."
Then rose the king in fury: "Whose bold plan this?" he
cried,
"Behold him!" whispers Esther, "for 'tis Haman, at thy side."

"Appease mine anger, let him hang full fifty cubits high!"
'Tis done, and messengers off speed, the Jews' release is nigh.
Their sorrow now to joy is turned, and long shall Esther's
name,
Illumined shine in Israel's heart with faith's undying fame.

—*Myrtilia E. Mitchell.*

ABOUT PURIM

I love this merry Purim time,
I know the story, too,
And if you don't mind listening
I'll tell it all to you.

Well, many, many years ago,
In Persia, far away,
The King Ahasuerus lived
And ruled with royal sway.

There was a lovely Jewish maid,
And Esther was her name;
The king soon chose her for his wife,
So queen she then became.

Her cousin's name was Mordecai,
A good and pious Jew,
Who loved Queen Esther very much
And to the king was true.

Now Haman, the king's favorite,
 A very wicked man—
 Just wanted to kill all the Jews
 And formed a cruel plan.

But Mordecai let Esther know;
 At once she told the king,
 Who, when he heard the wicked plot,
 Was mad as anything.

"Oh, no, the Jews shall all be saved,"
 Ahasuerus said;
 And Haman and his wicked sons
 Were hanged till they were dead.

—*Miriam Myers.*

HADASSAH

I love to think of Esther,
 A simple Jewish maid,
 When in her uncle's home she lived
 And happily obeyed.

Before she thought of Shushan,
 Its splendor and its gloom,
 Or dreamed her deed of faith might save
 Her people from its doom.

Her mind then had the sweetness,
 Her heart the courage high,
 That later bade her say, "I go,
 And if I die, I die."

—*Jessie E. Sampter.*

MODEL PROGRAM FOR PURIM

II

[*To be given chiefly by the Senior Pupils*]

1. Song, "EN KELOHENU".....*Entire School*
2. Prologue, "THE JOLLY JESTER".....*Intermediate Pupil*
3. Song, Hymn 126, Moses Hymnal.....*Entire School*
4. A Legend for Purim.....*Senior Pupil*
5. Song, Hymn 128, Moses Hymnal.....*Entire School*
6. Recitation, "ESTHER TODAY".....*Senior Girl*
7. Violin Solo*Senior Pupil*
8. Play, "STAR OF JUDAH".....*Senior Pupils*
(*With or without Tableaux*)
9. Song, "STAR-SPANGLED BANNER".....*Entire School*

VARIATIONS

For the Prologue, No. 2, it is possible to substitute the Prologue by Abraham Burstein (page 143), or "Good Purim" (page 144); for "A Legend of Purim" it may be found advisable to have an older pupil write a brief synopsis of the Purim story.

The message of No. 6, is contained in "Purim" (page 147), or "A Purim Retrospect" (page 148) may be used.

No. 7 may be omitted for want of time, or slipped in between the acts. Be sure you pick out a good performer; this matter is often left to chance, and a well-meaning beginner does his share to bore and annoy the audience.

PROLOGUE TO PURIM ENTERTAINMENT

[*To be spoken by boy in clown costume before the curtain*]

THE JOLLY JESTER

David, David, come and see
 What my mother made for me;
 Funny suit of red and green,
 Funniest hat you've ever seen!
 Won't I be the queerest sight
 When I sing tomorrow night:
 "Heint is Purim, morgen is ois,
 Git mir a groshen, and varft mir arois."*

I shall be a jolly jester;
 Sister Ruth will dress as Esther;
 Mother's skirt and cloak she'll wear
 And shining things upon her hair;
 Sam is Haman, and his nose
 Will be a mile long, I suppose.

Come and mask on Purim night!
 We will help to dress you right.
 You can be a Persian king—
 Soldier, slave, or anything;
 Buy a mask and come along,
 And help us sing our Purim song:
 "Heint is Purim, morgen is ois,
 Git mir a groshen, and varft mir arois."*

* *Actors behind the curtains repeat the old song. If desired, the following free translation may be substituted—*

"Today is Purim, tomorrow it's o'er;
 So give me a penny—then push through the door!"

—*Elma Ehrlich Levinger.*

A PROLOGUE

FOR A PURIM PLAY OR PANTOMIME

When Purim's happy day is here
We children always feel so queer!
We want to play and romp and run
From early morn to setting sun.
In every nook and ledge we snoop
To seek enjoyment for our troop.
But now at last we've found the best
Of fun for you—I'm sure you've guessed
It long ago—we're going to play
The happy Purim play today.
And Esther will be queen once more—
A queen, I'm sure, you'll all adore!
And Vashti, Haman, Mordecai,
And all the rest will pass you by.
To show that God is ever there
To help His people in despair.
And if you're quiet as a mouse,
And not a sound disturbs the house,
The actors will appear, and do
Their best to cheer and liven you!

—*Abraham Burstein.*

[*This has been found to be an excellent Prologue for the
Shadow Pantomime of Esther.*]

GOOD PURIM! GOOD PURIM!

Purim is here now at last, and again comes the wonderful
 day,
 Bringing us memories we cherish, and bidding all cares pass
 away!
 Purim has come as a joy-day, to fill us with thoughts of
 great deeds,
 Telling of victories triumphant they won without bloodshed
 or war,
 Showing how noble the heroes—how great is the God we
 adore!

Purim's reign is here again; everything today
 Strives to shine with the joy divine, seeming now to say,—
 "Good Purim! Good Purim! Happy day of gladness!
 Good Purim! Good Purim! Drive away all sadness!
 Once a year, filled with cheer, Purim's here—
 O welcome, gladsome Purim!

On high, aloft, let's raise our voices,
 The sky smiles soft when youth rejoices,
 O welcome, gladsome Purim!
 Good Purim! Good Purim! Happy day of gladness!
 Good Purim! Good Purim! Drive away all sadness!"

—*Samuel S. Grossman.*

A LEGEND FOR PURIM

[To be recited by one of the older pupils]

The Jews of Shushan were doomed to die, and now they sat in the synagogue and along the roads dressed in sack-cloth and mourning. For the fear of Haman was great in the land and he was very powerful. The little children feared him also, for of all the Jews of Shushan doomed to die through Haman's hate, Haman hated the little children

most, since he feared that God would hear their crying and spare the Jews.

And he said: "Tomorrow I will hang Mordecai and kill all the Jewish children in the empire from Hodu unto Kish."

And the little Jewish children gathered in the school, and tears ran down their white cheeks like rain, and they were weak and fasting, for they had eaten nothing all day. From early morning they sat weeping in the school, tasting no food and praying for help.

Their mothers gathered at the doors and cried to their children: "Here is bread; here is water. Eat and drink, little ones, for why should you suffer from hunger on your last day on earth?"

But the children answered their mothers: "We will taste no food today, even though God—may His name be blessed—deliver us unto death tomorrow." For they longed to fast like their elders.

And the mothers stood at the doors wailing and weeping, and the little children wept within. Their weak voices rose higher and higher, until the sobs and prayers of the little Jewish children reached the ears of God Himself as He sat on the judgment seat with His angels around Him. And their cries were in His ears as the bleating of the young lambs before they go to the slaughter.

God said: "I hear their crying." And God arose from the seat of judgment and seated Himself upon the seat of Mercy. And He tore in two pieces the scroll on which the doom of the Jews was inscribed, for God said: "I am pitiful for the little Jewish children and their prayers alone have moved me. They must not die."

—Adapted by *Elma Ehrlich Levinger*.

ESTHER TODAY

[*A recitation for an older girl*]

You have all heard the story of Esther,
Who pled for the Jews long ago;
Who rescued our race from destruction,
Who delivered our brethren from woe.
Do you think when you read of her courage,
So great for a girl to display,
And her simple, unfaltering devotion,
That an Esther is needed today?

We need women, real mothers in Israel,
Who love their faith dearer than life,
Who will teach Israel's faith to their daughters,
And arm worthy sons for the strife.
For enemies, deadly as Haman,
Are still eager our people to slay;
And to battle with falsehood and error
An Esther is needed today.

Let us then do our duty as she did,
Trusting God to the last—unafraid;
Let us never be traitors or cowards,
When our people beseech us for aid;
Forget not that He knows His people;
That He will protect us alway—
And remember to fight for Him gladly
If Esther is needed today.

—*Elma Ehrlich Levinger.*

PURIM

Come, quaff the brimming festal glass!
Bring forth the old good cheer!
For Esther's Feast has come at last—
Most gladsome in the year.

And now, when hearts beat glad and free,
Come, gather all about,
And tell once more how, long since, He
Did put our foe to rout.

Full oft has beauty ruled a land
And held its sceptered sway;
Full often foiled the avenging hand
And bade oppression stay.

But ne'er did beauty so avail
As when fair Esther's charm
'Gainst vengeful Haman did prevail
To 'fend the Jews from harm.

So all the dire impending woe
That hovered o'er their head,
Did light upon their ruthless foe
And ruined him, instead.

And thus, through all the ages long,
In every land and clime,
They chant an old thanksgiving song,
E'er mindful of that time.

Yet, Israel's Guardian never sleeps—
No slumber to His eye!
But loving watch He ever keeps
Upon His flock from high.

—C. David Matt.

A PURIM RETROSPECT

Come, tell us the story again
You told us when we were young,
Of Esther, the great Jewish queen,
And Haman—the one they hung;
And how the tables were turned,
And Mordecai came to be great,
How he won the respect of the king,
Though sprung from low estate.

We clustered around the broad table
On which all the dainties were spread,
And the rays seemed as soft as moonbeams
From the seven-star lamp overhead;
And we seemed once more to be children,
Aglowing with youthful glee,
The youngest—a baby of twenty—
Perched up on his mother's knee.

Well, father read out the Megillah,
We knew it all through and through,
Though it's wonderful how, in that small book,
One always finds something that's new;
So we wept again where Esther
Risked her own life to see the king,
And cried "Bravo" when Haman was ordered
Upon his own gallows to swing.

But when we came to the hero
(Who used to sit out by the gate),
Led all over Shushan by Haman,
And robed in the king's own state,
We clapped our hands for wonder—
How strangely things came about—
And thought we could hear the thunder
That echoed the people's shout.

And then the ten sons of Haman,
And those that rejoiced at the news—
That ranged on the side of the wicked
And perished instead of the Jews—
We thought how God in His wisdom
His breath to each creature doth give,
And yet how He blots out millions
That millions of others may live.

Our reading and feasting had ended,
And father looked wisely at all,
And told us the lesson extended,
That Esther's brave life did recall:
"The path of the righteous is ever
God's vigilant care and cause,
And honesty, virtue and justice
Are heaven's immutable laws.

"The lowly shall rise from their thraldom,
And sit on the kingly throne,
And God, in His infinite mercy,
Will gather them for His own;
While those who sit in high places,
And mingle not justice with power,
Shall merit the wrath of the Almighty
And perish from that dread hour.

"The outward has nothing to boast of,
Nor figure, nor color of skin;
The image of God implanted—
Engraved in the heart within;
The gift to rule self is to each one,
To rule over many—to few;
But a single brave heart may work wonders
If only that one heart be true."

—W. S. Howard.

[*This recitation may be divided among several little girls as a dialogue, each taking a number of stanzas.*]

MODEL PROGRAM FOR PURIM

III

[For the Primary, Intermediate and Senior Divisions]

1. Children's Service.....*Entire School*
2. Purim Pageant.....*Entire School*

[Either alone or in co-operation with other Sabbath Schools]

As explained in the foreword to the Purim Pageant, page 409, it can be given successfully with only seventy-five children; for this reason it should make an ideal entertainment if it seems best to have all the pupils participate. The children's service, abbreviated if necessary, should open the program. While the actors, already in costume, are assembled in the dressing-room for the last directions, supervision of properties, etc., a very short musical program may be rendered by the Choral Society or the Alumni. Then the pageant follows, which, even in a shortened form, should be sufficient to fill out a well-rounded program. If the pageant is given on a larger scale, with a number of schools cooperating, the short service should be given by the children not participating in the entertainment and the adults in the audience; meanwhile the actors are being costumed ready to begin the spectacle promptly. There should be no extra numbers, and the opening addresses should be cut down as much as possible, for the pageant is a lengthy affair, and enough time should be allowed for its proper presentation.

PURIM GAMES FOR CHILDREN

By *Harold F. Reinhart*, Baton Rouge, La.

FINDING ESTHER'S CROWN

The children stand in an open circle with their hands behind them. One child (the king) stands in the middle. One of the children in the ring holds the "crown of Esther" behind him. It is the task for the one in the center to get that crown, by guessing which child has it and asking the correct questions. When "the king" is not looking the children may pass the crown from one to another. When "the king" succeeds in getting the crown, the one who had to give it up becomes the "king", and the game proceeds from the beginning.

The children must, of course, pretend to pass when they really do not have the crown, so as to bewilder the "king". The crown must be small enough to hold in the closed fist. During the game the following is sung:

All sing—

Oh, Esther's crown,
Oh, Esther's crown,
Oh, Esther's crown is lost.

King asks one child—

Oh, have you seen,
Oh, have you seen,
Queen Esther's crown today?

Child replies—

Oh, yes, my king,
Oh, yes, my king,
I saw it while at play.

King asks the same child—

Oh, can you tell,
Oh, can you tell,
Me where that crown did go?

Child replies (if he does not have the crown)—

Oh, no, my king,
Oh, no, my king,
I really do not know!

(Child reciting this must then bring hands in front of him and show that they are empty.)

Then the king asks his questions again of another child, and it continues till he asks the child who does hold the crown. The child replies in the same way to the first question, but the second must answer:

Oh, yes, my king,
Oh, yes, my king,
Just look and I will show!

MORDECAI THE JEW

The game is similar to the familiar "Farmer in the Dell". The children form a circle, joining hands, and move round one child in the center, who is Mordecai, all singing as they go. While they sing the second verse, "Mordecai" speaks to "Esther", calling her into the circle beside him. While the fourth verse is sung, "Esther" calls in "Ahasuerus". While the sixth verse is sung, "Ahasuerus" calls in "Haman". While the eighth verse is sung, all the children return to their original places in the ring; a new Mordecai is chosen and the game starts again.

I.

Oh, Mordecai, the Jew,
Oh, Mordecai, the Jew,
So brave and true,
And loyal, too,
Oh, Mordecai, the Jew.

II.

He speaks to Esther fair,
He speaks to Esther fair,
He sends her in
To see the king,
He speaks to Esther fair.

III.

Oh, Esther is the queen,
Oh, Esther is the queen,
Oh, Esther fair,
Beyond compare,
Oh, Esther is the queen.

IV.

She goes before the king,
She goes before the king,
She says: I crave,
My life you save,
She goes before the king.

V.

A—has—u—erus, king,
A—has—u—erus, king,
The king so great,
In all his state,
A—has—u—erus, king.

VI.

The king calls Haman in,
The king calls Haman in,
He cries: You die
On gallows high,
The king calls Haman in.

VII.

Oh, Haman bold and bad,
 Oh, Haman bold and bad,
 For he did choose
 To kill the Jews,
 Oh, Haman bold and bad.

VIII.

Now Haman is no more,
 Now Haman is no more,
 For Esther brave
 The Jews did save,
 Now Haman is no more.

THE TEN SONS OF HAMAN

Ten pins have faces painted on them and are dressed up to look like the ten sons of Haman. The names of the ten sons may be printed on them if desired: Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha, Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha, Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, Vaizatha.

The men are set up as ordinary ten pins, and the children take turns rolling the ball to see who can knock the most down.

CROWNING QUEEN ESTHER

A large picture of Queen Esther is pinned against the wall. The crown (painted on a card) is given to a blindfolded child who is told to put it on Esther's head. Each child is blindfolded and tries in turn to see who can come nearest to placing the crown in the right place.

Finding Esther's Crown

saw it while at play, Oh, can you tell, Oh,
 can you tell me where that crown did go?
D. C. al fine

The musical score for 'Finding Esther's Crown' is written for voice and piano. It consists of two systems of three staves each. The first system contains the first two lines of the song, and the second system contains the next two lines. The music is in a key with two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a common time signature. The piano accompaniment features chords and single notes, with some measures containing rests. The vocal line is written in a single staff with lyrics underneath. The piece concludes with a double bar line and the instruction 'D. C. al fine'.

Mordecai, the Jew

H. F. R.

Marzial marcato

M. H. E.

1. Oh, Mor - de - cai, the Jew, Oh, Mor - de - cai, the Jew, So
 3. Oh, Es - ther is the Queen, Oh, Es - ther is the Queen, Oh,
 5. A - has - u - e - rus King, A - has - u - e - rus King, The
 7. Oh, Ha - man, bold and bad, Oh, Ha - man, bold and bad, For

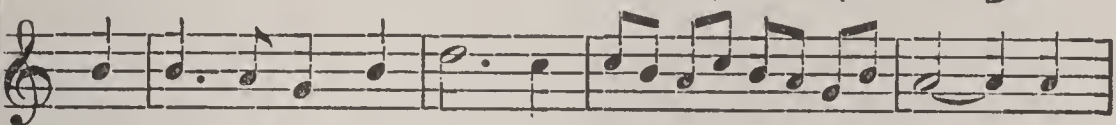
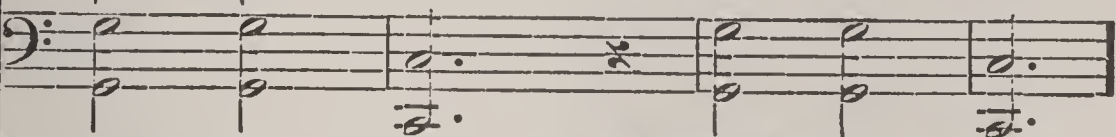
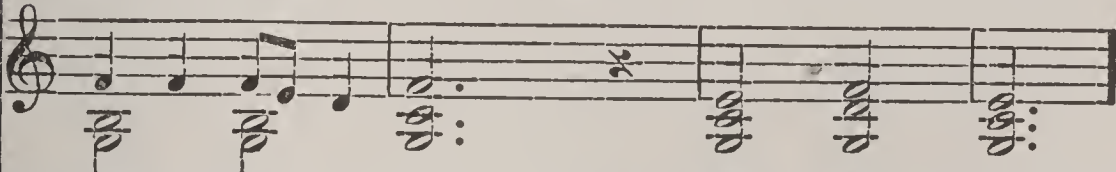
The musical score for 'Mordecai, the Jew' is written for voice and piano. It consists of two systems of three staves each. The first system contains the first two lines of the song, and the second system contains the next two lines. The music is in a key with two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a common time signature. The piano accompaniment features chords and single notes, with some measures containing rests. The vocal line is written in a single staff with lyrics underneath. The piece concludes with a double bar line and the instruction 'D. C. al fine'.

Mordecai, the Jew

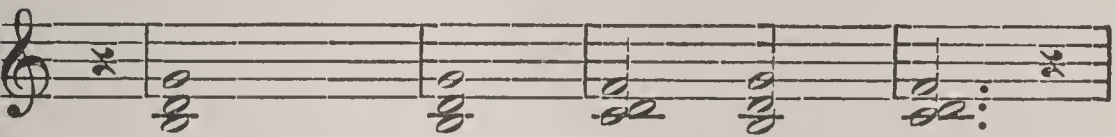
FINE



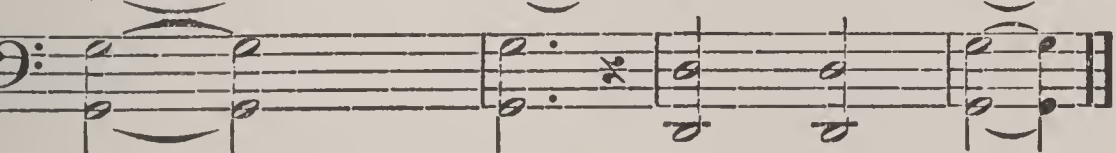
brave and true, and loy - al, too, Oh, Mor - de - cai, the Jew.
 Es - ther fair, be - yond com - pare, Oh, Es - ther is the Queen.
 King so great in all his state, A - has - u - e - rus King.
 he did choose to kill the Jews, Oh, Ha - man bold and bad.



2. He speaks to Es - ther fair, He speaks to Es - ther fair, He
 4. She goes be - fore the King, She goes be - fore the King, She
 6. The King calls Ha - man in, The King calls Ha - man in, He
 8. Now Ha - man is no more, Now Ha - man is no more, For

*D. C. al fine*

sends her in to see the King, He speaks to Es - ther fair.
 says I crave my life you save, She goes be - fore the King.
 cries, you die on gal - lows high, The King calls Ha - man in.
 Es - ther brave, the Jews did save, Now Ha - man is no more.



PASSOVER

PASSOVER IN THE CLASS-ROOM

PERHAPS no Jewish holiday is more grateful to the child mind than Passover. Its story is dramatic and colorful and easy to understand; its ceremonialism is attractive; art, music and legend all do their part to enrich the ancient festival with the potent appeal of poetry. And because of this very wealth of material the teacher must be on her guard to choose only the elements which will appeal to the children of her grade, rather omitting some phases of the Passover story than confusing her pupils with too many points. The same holds equally true of the Passover entertainment. Far better a short, unified program, presenting only one or two concrete ideas to the children, than a jumbled collection of unrelated facts.

Of course, the corner-stone of all class-room celebration must be the *story*. For the Primary Division, it is sufficient to give the historical phase very briefly, touching first on the nature aspect of the holiday. This will be especially easy if Passover comes late enough for the children even in our northern Sabbath Schools to know it as a spring holiday. In any case, let the teacher bring some spring flowers or pussy-willows to class, place them on her desk, and, after an opening song expressive of the spring-time (such as "Behold, it is the Spring-time of the Year", Union Hymnal 162), she should be ready to begin something in this manner:

Children, have you noticed how the blades of grass are pushing out of the dark ground where they have been sleeping all winter? Or how the baby leaves are just tumbling out of their little brown cradles? And in the park the other day I saw two bold red tulips and several dandelions. They all seemed to be so glad that the winter was over at last and they could come out and enjoy the spring.

In the open country the fields are all getting green and the violets are springing up and the pussy-willows are opening along the brooks. They are all glad to be free after the long, cold winter. The farmers are glad, too, for now they can go out of doors and begin to work in the beautiful fields. When they come out of their houses in the early morning and listen to the birds singing, and see the dew sparkling on the young, fresh grass, I think a great many of them, if they could, would have some celebration just to show how glad they are to welcome spring back to the earth.

In the olden days the Jewish people were all farmers, you know, and they were always very glad to greet the spring, which came just around Passover. They had a beautiful festival, and danced and made merry; and from all parts of Palestine they came to Jerusalem, bringing offering to the great, beautiful Temple there, to show God how happy they were to greet the spring.

There was another reason why the Jewish people kept Passover and why we Jews still keep it today. It was not only to welcome the coming of spring, but to

celebrate the birthday of the Jewish people, their Fourth of July, the day they became a free people.

[Here the teacher will introduce the historical element, dwelling chiefly on the one figure in the whole story which will appeal to the mind and heart of the young child—the tale of the child Moses. The author has found the following very easy for young children to follow. The language may become more difficult, and more incidents may be introduced for older pupils]:

I want to tell you how the Jewish people came to be free. For a while they were living in Egypt, and the king, or Pharaoh, as they called him, treated them very cruelly. He made them slaves and gave them little to eat or drink, and forced them to work all day long in his brick-yards building him great monuments which seemed to reach the sky.

But this was not the most cruel thing he did. He was afraid that some day the Jewish people would get tired of being ill-treated and would try to fight him. He was not afraid of the tired men working in his brick-yards, for they would soon be too worn-out and old to fight anybody. But he feared some day the little boys would grow up and form a powerful army against him. So he gave a dreadful order to all the Jewish people.

He commanded every Jewish mother to kill her boy baby as soon as he was born. You see, he was not afraid of the girl babies, for he thought they would grow up weak women, who could not fight, but would be willing to work for him. Just think how very sad the poor mothers must have felt to lose their little babies.

But there was one woman, one Jewish mother, who would not obey the commands of the cruel Pharaoh. She kept her little boy baby hidden in her house as long as she dared. Then when she was afraid that Pharaoh's bad soldiers would hear the baby crying and take him away from her, she made him a little basket of rushes and wrapped the little boy in a soft cloth and put him in the basket. Then she set the basket afloat on the river Nile, and told the boy's sister Miriam to hide in the rushes along the river to watch what happened.

In a little while the beautiful princess, the daughter of Pharaoh, came down to bathe in the river. She saw the basket floating along the stream, and she sent one of her servants to wade into the water that she might draw it out. And the servant brought the basket to the princess, who lifted the cloth and saw a beautiful baby boy sleeping beneath it.

The princess was not at all like her cruel father; she had a kind heart, and as soon as she saw the baby she said: "This must be one of those poor children that my father has ordered to be slain. I will take care of him and bring him up as my own child. I wish I could find a Jewish mother to be a nurse to him."

Then Miriam, the baby's sister, who had been listening to every word the princess had said, bowed before her and said: "I will bring you a Jewish woman to nurse him." And she hurried away, and whom do you suppose she brought—yes, the baby's own mother. She was very glad to get her baby again, and promised the princess to take the best of care of him. And the princess called him "Moses", and when he grew

older she had him live in her own house and brought him up like her own son.

This is how God saved the baby Moses. When Moses grew up he became a strong, brave man, and did all he could for the Jewish people. He led them out of Egypt, where they had been slaves for so many years, and made them free, and taught them to love God and obey Him. And because Moses led them out of Egypt on Passover we always remember him on this day when he helped the Jewish people to become free.

For the Intermediate Division the story becomes less concerned with the nature aspects of the holiday and emphasizes the historical side. But the teacher should dwell for a moment on the fact that, like the two other great national holidays of ancient Israel, Succoth and Shabuoth, Passover is also an agricultural holiday. For the pupil must not be allowed to forget that the Jew was first of all a pastoral people, and, if the subject is treated properly, the primitive in him will welcome stories of the merriment at the sheep-shearing descriptions of the harvest festivals of his ancestors.

From the simpler agricultural festivals, take the pupil to the elaborate pilgrimages in the days of the kings. Speak of the religious revivals in the days of Hezekiah and Josiah, describing how from every part of Israel pilgrims gathered to eat of the sacrificial Pascal Lamb in the shadows of Jerusalem.

It will be easy to introduce the story of the Exodus by telling the class that, like the other Jewish agricultural festivals, Passover has its historical as

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well as its nature origin. Just as this spring feast celebrates the revival of life in all living things, it also commemorates the birth of life in an entire people. For Passover is really the Fourth of July of the Jewish people.

The story of the Exodus should follow, adapted to the grade and the historical background of the pupils. Children of the Intermediate Department are of the hero-loving age, and, although the teacher should not forget to emphasize that it was God Himself who saved His people, still she will do well to dwell upon the heroic figures which crowd the canvas of the Passover story: Moses, humble and fearless; Aaron, eager to serve; Miriam, whose dance beside the sea still glows with poetic light through the centuries. Not only the Bible, but legendary material can be drawn upon: Ginzberg's translation of the best-known Jewish legends is rich in stories such as children love—Moses' kindness to the lost lamb, Pharaoh's test when he mistrusted the child who had snatched at his crown, the last meeting between Pharaoh and Moses. These are rich in color, and so quaint that they capture and hold the imagination of the child, giving a certain humanity to the distant, sometimes too heroic, figures.

In telling the story of the Exodus, the teacher should dwell longest upon the story of the first Seder. Draw at great length the picture of the tribe of once-frightened slaves, now strong in hope, as girded for their journey, with their staves in hands, they gathered about their tables to eat the paschal lamb. Repeat the command of Moses—that this feast is to be

come an institution in Israel for all time, and that fathers should tell their sons each year the meaning of the Passover feast.

From this it is an easy transition to the Seder of today. In the Intermediate Division the ceremonial aspect of each holiday should be more emphasized than any other feature, for at this age the child will take a lively interest in all he sees about him and "seeks to learn the meaning of these things". Those who instituted the Seder were wise in the principles of modern pedagogy, with its insistence that the child learns by doing. Nothing can take the place of the Seder in the child's own home, with a thoughtful parent explaining the various symbols of the feast. But since the Seder is often absent from the home—even a home Jewish enough to send the child to a Sabbath School—the Sabbath School must do its best to give the child something of the thrill and joy of the Passover season.

In one of the programs prepared for this holiday the author has endeavored to present a reverent treatment of the Seder service, in which a few children, at least, can participate, and the audience learn far more clearly than from pictures or text-book what the Seder and its symbols really mean. Such a number will be particularly effective if no Seder is given for the congregation or Sabbath School. But if no public Seder of any kind is given, the teacher should at least bring the symbols of the feast to the class-room, questioning the children who have seen a Seder concerning them, and when necessary, adding her own comments. Let it be clearly understood that the author does not in

any sense hold that such substitutes can compare with actual participation in the service; but, having met more than one product of our Sabbath Schools who was utterly ignorant of the simplest features of the Passover celebration, she believes that even such pseudo-participation as she has suggested will not be entirely in vain.

In some schools, where the classes are not too large, it is often possible for the energetic teachers of the Intermediate Division to arrange a simple Seder either for the whole school or for the pupils who have made an intensive study of the service. This will be especially good if no other "get-together" party has been given for the parents during the year. It should not be necessary to warn those who plan such a Seder that too elaborate preparations, especially for the meal, are likely to weary those responsible for the affair and make them hesitate to repeat it. Better a very simple meal year after year than an elaborate banquet, which will prove so expensive and laborious that no one will have the courage to repeat it. If possible, the service should be cut down to meet the needs of the younger pupils, and the supper should be followed by a simple program consisting of some of the suggested numbers given below.

In treating the Passover story for the Senior Division, it is a good thing to mention at least the spring festivals of other people. Nearly all children of this age know the touching story of Persephone's return to the Earth Mother, Demeter; from this the teacher may turn to the festivals of the early Saxon peoples in honor of their goddess of spring, whose name still

survives in the spring festival of Resurrection which the Christian world calls Easter. It may be well to note certain obvious similarities, such as the use of the Easter egg, the sign of new life, and the egg upon the Seder table.

Here the teacher or one of the older pupils may recite bits of glorious poetry from the Song of Songs, which the children learn is always read in the synagogue during the Passover season. The bits descriptive of the return of spring are best, such as the famous passage (2:11-12), while the poem, "Pass-over" (Deborah Kleinert Janowitz), found on page 180, draws a good analogy between the birth of a new season and the birth of a nation.

When telling the story of the Exodus, the teacher must be careful not to repeat at length the more obvious details which the child should have learned during its first years at the Sabbath School. For example, there is no excuse for dwelling upon the finding of Moses and the somewhat doubtful episode of the slaying of the Egyptian taskmaster to such a length that all ethical inferences must be slurred or omitted altogether for lack of time. This does not mean that there should be any direct moralizing, but it seems a great pity to miss the opportunity of using the Passover tale to drive home a lesson so powerfully appealing to generous-hearted and idealistic adolescents.

"God took the children of Israel out of Egypt and set them free to make them His slaves", says Victor Hugo. To put it less cynically, to help the child to grasp the lesson that freedom for the Jew meant consecrated labor for all humanity, is to draw at least one

obvious moral from the Passover narrative. It is not of much moment that the confirmand remembers the name of the particular Pharaoh who persecuted the Israelites or the course of their journey through the wilderness; but if (as Dr. Kohler puts it) the child is taught to feel his obligation "to do what is in our power to offer relief to the oppressed and help to the unprotected," the time spent in studying the Exodus will not be wasted. If the story of Egyptian slavery leads the descendants of these persecuted slaves to hate all slavery and persecution, the tale of Pharaoh's court will not be without its ethical influences. But to do this the teacher must be filled to overflowing with her narrative; an instructor wondering vaguely what comes next in her story will not be able to do any more than give her pupils the dry bones of history.

If time permits, it is always a good thing to speak of Passover in the Middle Ages. Extracts from a masterpiece like Heine's "Rabbi of Bacharach" are worth hours of uninspired descriptions of Passover rites or medieval persecutions. They bring up stories of the blood accusation which may be of interest to more advanced pupils. Above all, draw upon the rich treasure-house of poetry and art, and make of your information not a lesson but an inspiration to the class.

The story over in the Primary Division, there is plenty of opportunity for class-room dramatization. The finding of Moses can be played by very young children, a large doll serving for the baby. The writer knows through experience how fascinating this story

is to young children after observing her own little ones of two and three playing it with a favorite doll, who forever after bore the appropriate name of Moses. For handwork the children may do their usual coloring or sewing of pictures, and they will surely enjoy making paper baskets to represent the tiny ark which Jochebed floated upon the Nile. Again the sand-table will prove a boon to show the scene by the river, with dolls dressed in class (tissue paper is excellent for this) representing the princess, her attendants and the other characters in the story. For somewhat older children, with nimbler fingers, it is a great joy to cut out and fold the various symbols of the Seder table. These can be purchased from Bloch Publishing Company, and the children are always eager to take them home to show just what they have learned in Sabbath School.

If the Intermediate or Senior Divisions are fortunate enough to have a "Junior Sisterhood" or Sewing Circle, the young girls may be taught to embroider linen clothes to cover the matzah; these may be done with Hebrew lettering or appropriate symbols. They will also be able to prepare attractive invitations for a Seder or posters to announce a program, lettering either of the quotations given below. The scrap-books started at Succoth should receive special attention, and should be enriched with verse and stories (original, whenever possible) and drawings which embody the symbolism of the holiday.

The subject of class parties has already been touched upon. If no formal program is given, the program following the public Seder must be as sug-

gestive as possible of Passover, but it must not be too long. The Chad Gadya tableau for the little ones, a recitation, an essay or story, and several songs by the classes, should be sufficient.

The following stories will be of great assistance to the teacher in giving the children a richer background for the holiday. Many of them will be excellent for class-room use, others will be used chiefly for reference.

STORIES ABOUT PASSOVER

FOR INTERMEDIATES

Modern

"THE LUCK OF THE COHENS" from "*A Modern Esther*".
Emily Goldsmith Gerson (Greenstone).

"HOME AGAIN". *Ibid.*

"A REAL PASSOVER" from "*Jewish Holyday Stories*".
Elma Ehrlich Levinger (Bloch).

"A TALE OF THE PASSOVER" from "*Festival Stories*".
Hannah Trager (Dutton).

Biblical

"PLAYMATES IN EGYPT" from "*Playmates in Egypt*".
Elma Ehrlich Levinger (Jew. Pub. Soc.).

"THE BREAKFAST OF THE BIRDS" from "*The Breakfast of the Birds*". Jehudah Steinberg (Jew. Pub. Soc.).

FOR SENIORS

Modern

"ELIJAH'S GOBLET" from "*Ghetto Comedies*". Israel
Zangwill (MacMillan.)

"ELIJAH THE PROPHET". Sholom Aleichem (trans. by
Berman), from "*Apples and Honey*". (Bloch.)

"HOW SHIMMELE BECAME A SCEPTIC" from "*Idylls of the Gass*". Martha Wolfenstein (Jew. Pub. Soc.).

"THE PASSOVER GUEST" from "*Yiddish Tales*". Sholom
Aleichem (trans. by *Frank*.) (Jew. Pub. Soc.).

"RABBI OF BACHARACH". Heinrich Heine.

"THE UNWELCOME GUEST" from "*In Many Lands*".
Elma Ehrlich Levinger (Bloch).

REFERENCES FOR HIGHEST GRADES AND TEACHERS

BIBLE: Exodus, chap. 1-15 (special emphasis on 12 and 13).

JEWISH ENCYCLOPEDIA: Passover and related subjects.

HISTORY OF THE JEWS. Graetz (vol. 1, ch. 1).

FESTIVAL STUDIES. Israel Abrahams (Greenstone). Chap. 1, 7, 15, 23.

LEGENDS OF THE JEWS. Louis Ginzberg (Jew. Pub. Soc.). Vol. II and III. Consult Index.

JUDAISM AS CREED AND LIFE. Morris Joseph (MacMillan). Book II, chap. 4.

GUIDE FOR INSTRUCTION IN JUDAISM. Dr. K. Kohler (Cowen). Chap. 4, page 114.

"IN MANY LANDS." Elma Ehrlich Levinger (Bloch). Pages 79-80.

THE PASSOVER PROGRAM

As has been mentioned in the previous holidays, Passover should not be celebrated by an elaborate program if a large entertainment has been given on Purim. In many cases the congregation will prefer a public Seder at which the program suggested above will be found suitable. However, if there is no public Seder, a program should be given for the parents and pupils, either at an informal party or as a formal program in the school's auditorium.

The programs which follow will be seen to follow as closely as possible the idea of grading. In one the ceremonial aspect of the holiday predominates; in the other, the historical. These programs may be shortened if desired, or substitutions may be made from the anthologies which accompany them. But under no circumstances should they be made longer, while all substitutions should be chosen carefully, so as not to conflict with the central idea of the program.

The following quotations will prove suitable for programs or placards announcing the program:

For lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone;
The flowers appear on the earth;
The time of the singing of birds is come.

—*Song of Songs.*

An ancient people celebrates its birth
 To freedom, with a reverential mirth,
 With customs quaint and many a hoary rite,
 Waiting until, its tarnished glories bright,
 Its God shall be the God of all the earth.

—*Israel Zangwill.*

'Tis the Passover of reviving earth,
 The longed-for resurrection of its charms,
 Each peeping bud a type of Freedom's birth—
 A conquest each o'er winter's dread alarms.

—*Deborah Kleinert Janowitz.*

PLAYS FOR PASSOVER

INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR DIVISIONS.....*Modern*

"*The Silver Cup*". Elma Ehrlich Levinger. Published with this volume,

for which may be substituted

"*The Passover Guest*", six boys, two girls; a three-act play for older pupils, showing how Elijah, in the guise of a passing stranger, introduces the Seder—and much beside—into a modern home. Elma Ehrlich Levinger. (Young Judea.)

"*Gift of Elijah*", seven boys, seven girls; a very simple playlet in two scenes, one showing some of the preparations for the Seder, the other the family about the table. Elma Ehrlich Levinger. (Young Judea.)

"*The Trial of Passover*", ten boys or ten girls; a simple playlet in one scene, suitable for Intermediates at an informal entertainment. Meir Isaacs. (Young Judea.)

"*The Crumb Conspiracy*",¹ twelve boys or twelve girls; a "Seder humoresque in rhyme", in which the objects of the Seder table assume life and bring a fugitive crumb to trial; suitable for children thoroughly familiar with Seder observances. Samuel S. Grossman. (Young Judea.)

"*The Matzoh Shalot*", four boys two girls; a one-act sketch telling how good fortune came to a poor family on Passover eve; easy for Intermediates to produce. Emily Goldsmith Gerson. (Bloch.)

¹ Another fantastic Passover dialogue by the same author, "The Glad Maker," is suitable for very young children and can be procured from Young Judea, N. Y. C.

"To Save His Country", six boys, four girls; a one-act play for Intermediates or Seniors, which would act better with some judicious cutting; a good picture of the Seder of a French family in the days of Napoleon, from *"The Power of Purim and Other Plays"*. Irma Kraft. (Jew. Pub. Soc.).

INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR DIVISIONS.....*Historical*

"Out of Egypt". Elma Ehrlich Levinger. Published with this volume,

for which may be substituted

"From the Waters", five boys four girls, minor characters; a short play telling of the finding of Moses and why Pharaoh did not condemn the child to death; simple settings, but requires good acting, with Seniors in the leading roles. Elma Ehrlich Levinger. (Jewish Festival Book—Passover—Bureau of Jewish Education.)¹

¹ A Hebrew version, "Min Hamayim," has been prepared, a translation of "From the Waters," which is appropriate for advanced Hebrew classes, and may be obtained from Young Judea.

MODEL PROGRAM FOR PASSOVER

I

1. Opening Song, "A MESSAGE SWEET THE BREEZES
BRING", Union Hymnal 195.....*School*
2. Recitation, "THE PROMISE OF SPRING".....*Primary*
3. Dance of Freedom.....*Intermediates*
4. Recitation, "A LULLABY IN EGYPT".....*Intermediate*
5. Tableau, "THE FINDING OF MOSES".....*Intermediates*
6. Essay, "THE MEANING OF CHAD GADYA".....*Senior*
7. Song Tableau, "CHAD GADYA", *Primary or Intermediates*
8. Closing Song, "GOD OF MIGHT", Union Hymnal
164 *School*

VARIATIONS

For No. 2 may be substituted, "Passover" (page 180).

No. 4. If a longer recitation for a Senior is desired, "On the Picture of the Finding of Moses" (page 182) may be recited during the showing of the picture.

No. 5. If more elaborate tableaux are required, a set of elaborate Passover tableaux have been prepared by Samuel S. Grossman; they are for sale by the Young Judea.

No. 6 and the following number may be omitted if the program proves too long for an informal affair.

THE PROMISE OF SPRING

Swinging on the apple spray
 Sings a robin all the day:
 (How the song o'erflows his throat!)
 "Praise to God, who gave us May."

Shy the violet and afraid,
 Yet she murmurs in her glade,
 (All her soul in perfume shed,)
 "Thanks to Him for sun and shade."

If our Father loves them well,
 Bird and flower of the dell,
 His great heart will keep us warm—
 Israel's children, safe from harm;
 He who gives the violet dew
 Will guard faithful Israel, too.

—*Elma Ehrlich Levinger.*

PASSOVER

THE FIRST DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

The sullen ice has crept from sunny fields,
 The conflict of the elements is passed!
 Again the spring its wealth of verdure yields,
 The probing sun has conquered frost at last!

'Tis the Passover of reviving earth,
 The longed-for resurrection of its charms,
 Each peeping bud a type of Freedom's birth—
 A conquest each o'er winter's dread alarms.

All, all the sunny joys till now concealed,
 Are prototypes of Liberty's blest morn
 When Israel's rescue first that truth revealed—
 "To free and equal rights all men are born!"

Infallible as Nature in her round
Emancipates herself from winter's reign,
So shall the clarion note of Freedom sound
And all the world the burden proud sustain.

Oh mankind, hear!—and to all those proclaim
Who languish for the light of Freedom's sun—
Let all the Nations join the glad acclaim:
“Our God is One—Humanity is One!”

—*Deborah Kleinert Janowitz.*

DANCE OF FREEDOM

This dance should be expressive of the exuberance and joy of Spring, as well as the coming of Freedom to an oppressed people. A girl, who is an excellent solo dancer and gifted in pantomime, sits mourning upon the ground. She wears dark, coarse garments; her hair is flowing and unbound. A number of girls dressed in flowing robes of red and black, dark veils shrouding their faces, representing the Spirits of Hatred and Persecution, dance about her, mocking as they dance.

An equal number of dancers in white garments with rosy flowers twined about their flowing hair enter; they also dance about the central figure, their line interweaving with the dark spirits. The two groups must express for each other the eternal hatred of Spring for Winter, Good for Evil. Finally Evil Spirits are driven out.

The Spirits of Freedom dance about the central figure, Israel, who rises joyfully and throws off the dark garments; she wears flowing robes of pale green and gold; there is a gold crown about her head. About her waist is a girdle of flowers from which hang flowery garlands; she flings these to the dancers, who kneel about her in a closing tableau. If desired, these garlands can be made to form the lines of the Mogen David.

A LULLABY IN EGYPT

This is the song the Hebrew mother sang
In distant Egypt 'neath the morning star.

Hush, little baby, asleep on my arm,
Mother will watch you and keep you from harm,
Mother will linger to watch o'er your sleep,
Ah, but Nile waters are bitter and deep!

See the fair basket of willows I've made;
Sleep in it sweetly. Oh, be not afraid!
From Pharaoh's horsemen your mother will save—
How can I leave you upon the strange wave?

Though the dark waters may carry you far,
God will watch o'er you wherever you are;
Poor little baby, you smile in your sleep—
Ah, but Nile waters are bitter and deep!

—*Elma Ehrlich Levinger.*

ON THE PICTURE OF THE FINDING OF MOSES BY
PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER

This picture does the story express
Of Moses in the bulrushes;
How lively the painter's hand
By colors makes us understand.
Moses that little infant is,
This figure is his sister. This
Fine, stately lady is no less
A personage than a princess,
Daughter of Pharaoh, Egypt's king,
Whom Providence did hither bring
This little Hebrew child to save.
See how near the perilous wave

He lies exposed in the ark,
His rushy cradle, his frail bark!
Pharaoh, king of Egypt land,
In his greatness gave command
To his slaves they should destroy
Every new-born Hebrew boy.
This Moses was a Hebrew's son;
When he was born, his birth to none
His mother told, to none revealed,
But kept her goodly child concealed.
Three months she hid him; then she wrought
With bulrushes this ark, and brought
Him in it to this river's side,
Carefully looking far and wide
To see that no Egyptian eye
Her ark-hid treasure should espy.
Among the river flags she lays
The child. Near him his sister stays.
We may image her affright
When the king's daughter is in sight.
Soon the princess will perceive
The ark among the flags, and give
Command to her attendant maid
That its contents shall be displayed.
Within the ark the child is found,
And now he utters mournful sound.
Behold, he weeps as if he were
Afraid of Egypt's cruel heir!
She speaks; she says, "This little one
I will protect though he the son
Be of an Hebrew." Every word
She speaks is by the sister heard.
And now observe, this is the part
The painter chose to show his art.
Look at the sister's eager eye,
As here she seems advancing nigh.

Lowly she bends—says, “Shall I go
 And call a nurse for thee? I know
 A Hebrew woman liveth near.
 Great lady, shall I bring her here?”
 See! Pharaoh’s daughter answers “Go!”
 No more the painter’s art can show.
 He cannot make his figures move.
 On the light wings of swiftest love
 The girl will fly to bring the mother
 To be the nurse. She’ll bring no other.
 To her will Pharaoh’s daughter say,
 “Take this from me away,
 For wages nurse him. To my home
 At proper age this child may come.
 When to our palace he is brought,
 Wise masters shall for him be sought
 To train him up befitting one
 I would protect as my own son.
 And Moses be a name unto him,
 Because I from the waters drew him.”

—*Charles and Mary Lamb.*

CHAD GADYA

The character representing the Kid enters first and sings the chorus. This is repeated throughout by all the characters until the coming of the Angel of Death. Each character enters in a characteristic manner. The Goat should frisk, the Cat should creep along, while Water and Fire should keep up a continual battle in pantomime. Before the Angel of Death enters, they are all together near the front of the stage. The Angel of Death enters and holds out a sword. The characters representing the nations creep one by one below the sword and pass out. Only the Kid, signifying Israel, remains, and as he sings the last stanza, he advances slowly toward the Angel of Death who, cowering before him, creeps from the stage.

COSTUMES:

KID: Short white skirt or bloomers; white tight-fitting jacket, white stockings, close white cap, with peaks for horns.

CAT: Grey costume, made like one-piece pajamas, the sleeves and legs to extend over hands and feet as mittens and shoes.

DOG: Black with white spots, made like Cat's costume.

STICK: Long costume of light brown; should carry a staff.

FIRE: Flowing garments of red and yellow, decorated with fringes at the wrists; hair flowing.

WATER: Same as Fire, but in shades of green and blue.

OX: A brown costume similar to Dog, but cap having horns.

BUTCHER: Loose white robe with streaks of red, crimson girdle and head-dress; carries knife.

ANGEL OF DEATH: Black flowing garments with loose sleeves and draperies shrouding the face; should carry a long sword.

—Arranged by *Alexander M. Duskin*.

MODEL PROGRAM FOR PASSOVER

II

- 1. Opening Song, "GOD OF MIGHT", Union Hymnal
164*School*
- 2. Essay, "THE MEANING OF THE SEDER"....*Intermediate*
- 3. Song, "IF OUR GOD HAD NOT BEFRIENDED", Union
Hymnal 194..... *School*
- 4. Dance of Miriam's Maidens by the Red Sea,
Intermediates or Seniors
- 5. Recitation, "WHY MEYER LIKES PESACH",
Primary or Intermediate
- 6. Play, "THE SILVER CUP".
- 7. Closing Song, "AMERICA", Union Hymnal 226... *School*

VARIATIONS

No. 2 may be omitted if the idea is repeated in recitation or play.
No. 5, or: "Seder Night" (page 188); "The Seder" (page 189); "On
Passover Eve"(page 190) ; "Seder" (page 191); "Little Things" (page 194);
"The Seder Dish" (page 195); "Seder in Whitechapel" (page 195); "Why We
Keep Pesach" (page 196).

DANCE OF MIRIAM'S MAIDENS

The maidens follow Miriam upon the stage. They wear bright-colored robes of contrasting shades; their hair is arranged loosely and they carry cymbals. (These can be made by covering the tin covers of kettles with gold or silver paper.)

The music should be quick and triumphant; the dance should be full of life and motion. There should be much clashing of cymbals, the girls forming groups of twos, striking cymbals whenever they pass their partners in the course of the dance.

Miriam, who should be taller than the rest, should carry instead of cymbals an armful of flowers which she scatters as she dances, or a lyre which she pretends to play.

WHY MEYER LIKES PESACH

My, I'm glad the winter's over,
And that Pesach is so near,
'Cause I think the night of Seder
Is the best time of the year.

I can stay up long that evening;
All the silver's polished bright,
And the dishes are all shining,
And the cloth is clean and white.

And my brothers and big sister,
Who's moved to some other place,
All are gathered 'round the table
When my papa says the grace.

Then I ask him why that evening
Isn't like another night;
And my mama smiles at grandma
'Cause I read the Hebrew right.

Afterwards I find the Matzoh—
 Sister says it isn't fair,
 'Cause I know that papa hides it
 In the cushions of his chair.

'Bout that time I'm kinda sleepy,
 But I just hold up my head;
 How could they say the 'Had Gadya
 If I had to go to bed?

When I wake up it is morning,
 And the sun is shining bright,
 And I wish that it was next year—
 And another Seder night!

—*Elma Ehrlich Levinger.*

SEDER NIGHT

Why are the hearts of our people so light?
 Why is it home is so wondrously bright?
 Happiness, holiness, shining o'er all,
 Hear how the men from the synagogue call,
 "Gut-Yomtove, Gut-Yomtove!" It's Pesach tonight!
 The Seder is set, and around in a ring
 We Princes are sitting, and father is King,
 While heaven is hearing the songs that we sing:
 "'Tis Yomtove, Gut-Yomtove!" It's Pesach tonight!

"Father, four questions: O why do we do
 All these strange things?" Then he tells us anew
 Beautiful stories of Passover night;
 And mother says low, as we hear him recite,
 "Be proud, little fellow, be proud you're a Jew!"
 I hear how the Jews pass across the Red Sea;
 God is their leader, and now they are free!
 The chosen of God, and His children are we!
 I'm proud, and I'm happy; I'm proud I'm a Jew!

—*Samuel S. Grossman.*

THE SEDER

Ring in the glorious festal-tide
That dawns o'er land and sea;
Proclaim the story far and wide
That made a people free.

A wondrous tale, and often told,
Yet never dim it grows,
And now, as in the days of old,
No fading light it knows.

But ever fresh and bright it comes
Across the moving years,
And gayly in our festive homes
Rings welcome in our ears.

A table set in spotless white,
With gladsome hearts around—
A hallowed scene of joy and light
As nowhere else is found.

The symbols of our feast in line
Before our view are spread,
The bitter herb and mystic wine,
The Paschal meat and bread.

Then from the book of ancient lore
The tale again is told,
With heightened tone and full rich store
Of legend quaint and old.

How Israel came to Egypt's land
And through long years did bide,
How on them Pharaoh laid his hand
In all his godless pride.

Till God, He heard their bitter cry,
 And swift His vengeance wrought,
 'Mid signs and wonders from on high
 The tyrant low was brought.

God led them on to victory,
 Freedom crowned their day;
 They marched away a people free
 With banners high and gay.

And so, with praise to God and song,
 Israel, far and wide,
 Remembers through the ages long
 This happy festal-tide.

—J. F.

ON PASSOVER EVE

On the Passover bed, at his table reclining,
 Eliphelet, the coachman, is happily dining.
 From afar has he borne all his festival needs,
 Over torturesome paths, over wearying meads;
 By day and by night has each suffering beast
 Long labored with him for the Passover feast;
 And at last the hard struggle is ended, thank Heaven!
 The crimson wine sparkles; removed is the leaven.

The house has been scoured to its uttermost nook,
 And the candles' bright rays on its spotlessness look.
 About are his children, like olive trees planted;
 His wife busy still, e'er the Kiddush is chanted;
 Then joyously smiling, in garments of snow,
 He tells them the tale of the days long ago:
 Elijah, he promises, soon shall rise up
 To drink of their wine in his Passover cup!

—(From the Hebrew of *J. L. Gordon*, translated by
Abraham Burstein.)

SEDER

If I ask too many questions
I'm told I'm impolite,
But I was bound that I'd find out
About the Seder night.

Before I had a chance to ask,
Our teacher told the class
She'd speak about the Seder eve
And how it came to pass.

Of course I knew most everything
About the Pesach time,
Excepting the Hagodah and
The subject of this rhyme.

Hagodah means just Narrative,
And this one tells about
The Israelites in Egypt and
How Moses led them out.

The Matzos are Unleavened bread,
The Egg, the Sacrifice,
Charoses, Mortar for the Bricks—
I know they're very nice,

'Cause I helped my mother make them,
And goodness, they were fine,
With almonds, sugar, apples,
And lots of raisin wine.

Moror, the Horseradish, you know,
Reminds us of the years
When Israel in Egypt lived
In bitterness and tears.

The Bone is for the Paschal Lamb,
 Of which we all have learned,
 That's roasted till it's very brown
 And looks as though 'twere burned.

The Parsley is a relish used
 At most meals in the East;
 We like ours in Salt-water dipped
 When at our Seder feast.

If Ehlee Novee should appear—
 Elijah is his name—
 He'd find an extra cup of wine
 All ready when he came.

I'm glad that teacher told us this;
 It's interesting, quite,
 This Narrative that she explained
 About the Seder night.

I think it's the grandest story;
 And one thing more I'll say—
 I'm proud I live in this country,
 The glorious U. S. A.

—*Miriam Myers.*

THE PASSAGE OF THE RED SEA

On the sand and sea-weed lying,
 Israel poured her doleful sighing
 While before the deep sea flowed;
 To their fathers' God they prayed—
 (And behind fierce Egypt rode)—
 To the Lord of Hosts for aid.

With lifted rod the prophet stood
On the margin of the flood,
And the summoned East wind blew,
And aside it sternly threw
The gathered waves, that took their stand
Like crystal rocks, on either hand,
Or walls of sea-green marble piled
'Round some irregular city wild.

Then with bow and banner glancing,
On exulting Egypt came,
With her chosen horsemen prancing
And her cars on wheels of flame,
In a rich and boastful ring
All around her furious king.
But the Lord from out His cloud—
The Lord looked down upon the proud
As the host drove heavily
Down the deep bosom of the sea.

With a quick and sudden swell
Prone the liquid ramparts fell:
Over horse and over car,
Over every man of war,
Over Pharaoh's crown of gold
The loud thundering billows rolled.
As the level water spread,
Down they sank—they sank like lead—
Down without a cry or groan.
And the morning sun that shone
On myriads of bright-armed men
Its meridian radiance then
Cast on a wide sea, heaving as of yore
Against a silent, solitary shore.

Then did Israel's maidens sing,
 Then did Israel's timbrels ring
 To Him, the King of Kings, that in the sea
 The Lord of lords had triumphed gloriously!

—*Henry Hart Milman.*

(From *Detroit Jewish Chronicle.*)

LITTLE THINGS

'Tis often little things, I'm told,
 That make men great or strong or bold,
 And nations, too, may stand or fall
 By what at first seems passing small.

Just so the Pesach wonders find
 A host of questions in my mind:—
 What if the wicked king had died
 Before he sought to slay our pride?

And what if Moses in the stream
 Had fallen out, in childhood's dream?
 And then, suppose that he had quailed
 When by Egyptian foes assailed?

What if there'd been no place to go
 When Jethro found him bowed in woe?
 What if no king had shown disdain
 For Moses' words, and plagues were vain?

See—all these queries serve to show
 Had not the small things been just so,
 We'd never have come here to pay
 Our thanks for Pesach's joys today!

—*Abraham Burstein.*

THE SEDER DISH

Bring us in the Seder dish
Long before the meat and fish!
Come Charoses, Moror too,
We shall taste of both of you!
Little bone that means a lamb,
Egg that just like Isaac's ram
Takes the place of sacrifice,
Come and make our Seder nice!
Isn't Pesach simply fine,
With the Matzoth and the wine?
Here's a seat for you and me,
All sit down in company!

—*Sulamith Ish-Kishor.*

SEDER IN WHITECHAPEL

"These be the symbols of the Passover—
Unleavened Bread that Moses baked in haste,
The bitter Herb of sorrow, and the Paste,
For mortar of the hateful taskmaster.
Lastly, the Paschal Bone, the sacrifice,
To show God's mercy when He passed our door,
But slew Mizraim's first-born. In no wise
Shall He desert His people evermore!"
So chants the father of the house, at ease,
Leaning on pillows on this Night of Nights
Before a table spread with goodly things—
A poor man, who would not change place with kings;
While in the gleam of festive candle lights
The youngest son is asking: "What are these?"

—*Leopold Spero.*

WHY WE KEEP PESACH

'Twas many hundred years ago
That in the far-off land
Of Egypt dwelt the Israelites—
A peaceful, happy band.

But Pharaoh, the Egyptian king,
Was wicked as could be;
He made the Israelites his slaves
And whipped them dreadfully.

To Moses God then spoke, and said,
“Go tell this cruel king
That he must let my people go,
Or on him I will bring

“Such punishment as he deserves”;
But Pharaoh did not heed,
So God sent ten most dreadful plagues,
And soon the Jews were freed.

To Egypt then they bade good-bye,
And Moses led the way;
Across the desert's burning sands
They tramped their weary way.

But Pharaoh soon was sorry that
He set his slaves all free;
“I'll go and bring them back”, he said,
“To work and build for me.”

So with his army he set out
The fleeing host to find;
The Red Sea they had almost reached
When he came up behind.

Whatever could they do, poor things?
Before them was the sea—
Behind, the foe marched quickly on;
They had no place to flee.

The Lord of Hosts came to their aid;
The waves aside He tossed,
And on dry land—the Red Sea bed—
The Jews in safety crossed.

And Pharaoh and his army great
Rushed on with leap and bound;
Down came those walls of water great
And all of them were drowned.

I hope you like this story that
I've told you in this rhyme—
The reason that we celebrate
This good old Pesach time.

—*Miriam Myers.*

MODEL PROGRAM FOR PASSOVER

III

1. Opening Song, "WHEN ISRAEL TO THE WILDERNESS",
Union Hymnal 136.....*School*
2. Essay, "PASSOVER, THE FESTIVAL OF FREEDOM",
Intermediate or Senior
3. Song, "WE LIFT OUR EYES TO YONDER HILLS",
Union Hymnal 62.....*School*
4. Play, "OUT OF EGYPT".
5. Closing Song, "GOD OF MIGHT", Union Hymnal
164 *School*

VARIATIONS

No. 1, or 146.

No. 2, or recitations: "The Heavenly Light" (page 199); "The Voice unto Pharaoh" (page 200); "The Mission of Moses" (page 201); "The Burial of Moses" (page 201); "The Shepherd" (page 202).

No. 3, or Union Hymnal 128.

No. 4, If no play is given, the recitation, "The Passover" (page 204), or "The Passage of the Red Sea" (page 192) may be substituted.

THE HEAVENLY LIGHT

When Israel in the wilderness
Had fled from Pharaoh's cruel might,
The Eternal sent, to lead them on,
A cloud by day, a fire by night.

And, guided by the heavenly flame,
That beacon from Jehovah's hand,
The chosen people safely reached
Their destined goal, the Promised Land.

Yet not alone in days of yore
Has God His wondrous mercy shown,
For still He grants to all mankind
A glorious light to lead them on:

A lamp of radiant, glowing hue,
By Israel born in every clime,
Through fire and flood, through tears and blood,
With courage grand and faith sublime.

That beacon is the Decalogue
Proclaimed from Sinai's flaming height,
And burning, as each age rolls by,
With purer, grander, holier light.

Oh, heavenly lamp! Thy light shall shine
Till sin and hate from earth depart;
Till wrong shall fail and right prevail
And justice rule the human heart.

—Adapted from *Max Meyerhardt*.

THE VOICE UNTO PHARAOH

"Pharaoh, Pharaoh, let my people go!"
 My fettered children toil with aching limbs
 And wearied fingers, brain and spirit bound.
 Their puny forms are bent; the shadow dims
 Their straining eyes; their ears are choked with sound,
 And thick with reek is every breath they draw.
 I gave them light to see and song to hear.
 I gave them Truth for guide and Love for law,
 And thou hast given darkness, blight and fear.

"Pharaoh, Pharaoh, let my people go!"
 In chains, unseen but strong, my children slave,
 Too dull for hopes or dreams, too dumb for prayers.
 Thou, thou hast robbed them of the youth I gave,
 The world I made, the joy that should be theirs.
 Their lives are coined to swell thy shining store;
 Then darrest thou plead, "Nay, Lord, I did not know"—
 Still heaping up their burdens more and more?
 The sand is running. Let my children go.

"Pharaoh, Pharaoh, let my people go!"
 Thy heart is hard. Be warned. The Plagues may come.
 The wrong thou dost may breed yet fouler wrong.
 Those lips may speak in flame that now are dumb;
 Those feeble hands, through wrath and hatred strong,
 May rend where they have wrought. Yea, once again
 Disease, Revolt and Crime may overthrow
 The Selfishness that bred them. Sons of men,
 For dread of vengeance, let my people go!

—*Arthur Guiterman.*

THE MISSION OF MOSES

When Israel in Egypt toiled and wept,
Moses afar the sheep of Jethro kept;
Unconscious of the coming word of God,
Following his flocks, the desert path he trod;
And as he sought to gather them one day
A half-grown lamb chanced from the fold to stray.

He called the wand'rer back, but all in vain;
And far he followed it across the plain
Until, at last, beside a streamlet's brink
He saw the wearied creature stop to drink.

"Yea", Moses said, "in sooth I did not guess
'Twas thirst that made thee my command transgress.
Thou hast come far—perchance art wearied sore."
And homeward in his arms the lamb he bore.

Then spoke the Lord: "Since thus thy love provides
For these poor sheep that man to thee confides,
As thy soul liveth I will trust to thee
My flock—my people's shepherd thou shalt be."

—*Alice Lucas.*

THE BURIAL OF MOSES

By Nebo's lonely mountain,
On this side Jordan's wave,
In a vale in the land of Moab
There lies a lonely grave;
But no man built that sepulchre,
And no man saw it e'er,
For the angels of God upturned the sod
And laid the dead man there.

This was the bravest warrior
 That ever buckled sword;
 This the most gifted poet
 That ever breathed a word;
 And never earth's philosopher
 Traced with his golden pen
 On the deathless page truths half so sage
 As he wrote down for me.

And had he not high honor?
 The hillside for a pall!
 To lie in state while angels wait
 With stars for tapers tall!
 And the dark rock-pines, like tossing plumes,
 Over his bier to wave,
 And God's own hand, in that lonely land,
 To lay him in his grave!

—*Cecil Frances Alexander.*

THE SHEPHERD

Before the throne of Egypt's lord,
 The shepherd leader, Moses, stands;
 A herder's staff he firmly grips,
 But with his undimmed eyes commands.
 And Pharaoh, with a fretful mien,
 Turns deaf ears to his pulsing word,
 That, coming in the name of God,
 Is as the voice of thunder heard.

"Oh, sovereign of the hardened heart,
 My people serve you night and day;
 The stubble of the field they hoard
 To make bricks from your river's clay;
 And monster cities do they lift
 From sand dunes cast up by the sea—
 They have been slaves a hundred years,
 But now my people must go free.

"My people cried unto their God,
A zealous God who heard their cry;
He walks the earth in majesty
And rules supreme the far-stretched sky.
He called them to possess His land,
The kindred of a noble breed;
That they in large and liberal ways
May serve their God, they must be freed.

"The woes of thousand pains they bear,
Baked by the sun that steams the Nile—
For every blow a foreman dealt
They wrought some huge but bloody pile;
The Egypt that you rule, they reared,
An empire mighty as the sea,
And for the things their hands have made
Their fathers' God now sets them free.

"My people must go free this day!
The Red Sea calls, yon desert cries,
And distant smoking Sinai peaks
Reverberate their agonies.
My God hath sent me to your face
To still the anguish of their moan;
Unless you free them from their bonds
My God will smite you and your throne!"

But Pharaoh of the hardened heart
He yielded not, as Moses spake,
Nor feared he that the shepherd's threat
Would make that House of Egypt quake.
His face grew hard, his heart was cold,
He raised no hand nor bent his knee—
How could he, bred in lust and greed,
Let slaves who served his throne go free?

Night shrouded him and Egypt's Nile,
 And earth upset, the slimy deep
 Spread o'er the shimmering, sandy wastes
 The things that death and darkness keep.
 And even then did Pharaoh smile,
 Till lastly Death, as hard as he,
 Touched him remorsefully, and then
 The slaving people were set free.

And slaves to serve him are they all
 Who know not God and the right;
 But Pharaoh lives in every age
 To covet lust and power and might.
 Today—always—a shepherd's voice
 Is lifted up to urge his plea,
 Where wrong enthroned grows hard of heart
 And will not let the people free!

—*Joseph Leiser.*

THE PASSOVER

'Tis night, dark night! A solemn stillness reigns
 O'er Egypt's land; the midnight hour is come,
 Whilst Pharaoh's disobedience still detains
 Against God's will His people; such a doom
 Ne'er fell on land, and ne'er will fall again;
 These were the words divine which Moses gave
 To Egypt's king and court; but all in vain.
 His heart is hardened, nothing now can save
 The land from desolation; for 'twas He,
 The Immutable, who gave this dread command:
 Death in his stead shall reign; Eternity
 Shall swallow up the first-born of the land.
 But hard and harder grew the tyrant's heart;
 No fear of God had ever entered there;
 With Israel's children, how could man so dare?

Not love, but tyranny, forbade him part
Against high Heaven's designs, his own to place
In competition! What, but want of fear
Of that power, could with unblushing face
Have made him tempt Omnipotence, and rear
His haughty head? But God in wisdom knew,
In wisdom infinite, divinely planned;
Th' Eternal mind already had in mind
Glorious redemption—infinately planned—
Oh, great deliverance! What love too great,
What gratitude of ours can e'er repay
The mercy which released us from that state
Of servile bondage and tyrannic sway?
In every house is silence most profound;
Th' Egyptians sleep—not so the chosen race
Who, all prepared, now wait without a sound,
Whilst anxious hope is pictured on each face.
Now suddenly along the midnight air
A low and piteous wailing first is borne,
Then loud and fearful shrieks of sad despair
Echo from house to house, where death has gone.
Swiftly upon the sable wing of night
The angel has gone forth; upon his brow
No pity can be traced; for in his sight
The prince and meanest slave are equalled now.
Then Pharaoh's voice, amid the general cry,
In grief and haste for Moses loudly called;
Moses and Aaron he implored to fly,
For death surrounds him—he stands appalled.
Then did the Israelites come forth as one,
Their wives, their children—cattle in arrear—
In silence and in haste their flight began;
They marched triumphant, for their God was near.
He was their only guide by night and day,
A cloud by day, a pillar of fire by night,
Thus gloriously He led them on their way.

And thus He ever keeps us in His sight.
 Now scarce encamped beside the sea, they view
 With dread and horror Pharaoh and his host;
 His chariots and his horsemen all pursue
 To overtake them ere they reach the coast.
 But what are human plans if God oppose?
 "Fear not", then Moses said, "but wait and see
 Salvation of the Lord; for these our foes
 Will never more on earth be seen by thee."
 The sea divides—they walk upon dry land;
 Then, at the voice Divine, he lifts his rod—
 Two upright walls of sea majestic stand.
 The cloud, which until now had gone before,
 Suddenly changes its resplendent light;
 The Israelites now crossed; the sea once more
 Resumes its place, but in the Egyptians' sight
 The light is darkness now; for all is seen
 Dark on that side, where Pharaoh's horsemen dash
 On with the rapid speed; while still between
 That cloud remains. A loud and fearful crash,
 Another and another quick succeed!
 'Tis God who fights against them; vain the thought
 To flee from Israel's face; for whence proceeds
 Such wondrous power, if not from God who fought
 On Israel's side?—who safe had reached the shore
 Ere morning's faintest blush began to spread;
 They saw the Egyptians sink to rise no more,
 Not one that was not numbered with the dead.
 Then all the multitude, with one accord,
 Joined Moses in a loud and heartfelt cry
 Of gratitude and praises to the Lord;
 "They sang to Him who triumphed gloriously."

—R. E. S.

SHABUOTH

SHABUOTH IN THE CLASS-ROOM

IN MANY Sabbath Schools Shabuoth coincides with the last day of school and the Shabuoth program is made to work in with "closing exercises". Some schools make what the author considers a grave mistake by closing the year's work with a perfunctory program or even a picnic. The big day of the year, Confirmation, is given over to the fortunate few who happen to be in the Confirmation Class. The younger brothers and sisters, even if they attend the Confirmation Exercises, often come to consider Shabuoth a day for white dresses and speeches, with receptions and ice cream and cake afterward.

The author's plea, therefore, is to allow every child to share the Shabuoth festival. Confirmation is a fitting climax which the child should be trained to anticipate from his earliest years in the Sabbath School. But on the preceding Sunday, or on the last Sunday of the school year, if the closing date comes later, there should be a distinct program for every member of the school, either a strictly Shabuoth Program or Closing Day Exercises. The latter may be a Flower Service, or may follow the lines of an old-fashioned School Exhibition which summed up the year's work.

No matter what program closes the year's work, there should be some discussion of Shabuoth in the class-room. The *story* for the Primary Division will, of necessity, be short, since many of the features of

this holiday correspond very closely to the aspects of the other nature festivals, Succoth and Passover. But the teacher can speak to the little ones of the spring harvest in Palestine, which the Jews of old celebrated by thanking God for His goodness and sharing of their bounty with others. Tell how they made the happy pilgrimage to Jerusalem, as on Succoth and Passover, bringing this time the sacrifice of first fruits, since the harvest comes earlier in Palestine than in this country. Add that, in Palestine, just as in this country, May and June make the fields beautiful with flowers, and that Shabuoth is really the Flower Day of the Jewish people. For even in the Middle Ages, when they had no land of their own, they tried to decorate their synagogues with flowers and brought fresh green grass to lay upon the floor. If possible, arrange for a Flower Service as part of the school program for the last day. But if this is impossible, at least have the children of the Primary classes bring flowers to put into the bright paper baskets they themselves have made, and arrange for these offerings to be taken to the children's ward in some hospital.

The story of the holiday should close with a little talk about the Ten Commandments and how they were given on Shabuoth, the child being reminded that on the previous holiday, Passover, the Jewish people became free to leave Egypt, while on Shabuoth they promised to obey God and keep His commandments, which all good people try to keep even after all these many hundreds of years.

The handwork should consist of making the baskets already described; wreaths of paper flowers to

trim the Sabbath School rooms, if there is to be a party, and the coloring or sewing of appropriate pictures.

The story for the Intermediate Division should bring out the fact that there are two early harvests in Palestine, the barley harvest of Passover, the early wheat harvest of Shabuoth. Hence on Shabuoth the offering of "first fruits" consisted not only of fruits and grains, but two loaves of bread baked from the first grain of the year's harvest. If time had not permitted more than casual mention at Succoth, Shabuoth is the appropriate time to describe the modern agricultural colonies of Palestine and our own Jewish Farm School in this country. For facts concerning ancient Judea take on new color and vitality when linked to the living realities of today. In connection with the harvest, have the pupils read or recite extracts from the Book of Ruth, or tell them the whole idyllic story, adding that the book is always read in the synagogue on Shabuoth, to bring out the Biblical injunction of sharing the harvest with those who followed the gleaners.

If time permits the teacher to speak of the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, she might do well to draw upon the poetic description furnished by Morris Joseph in his chapter on Shabuoth in his "Judaism as Creed and Life". The same chapter, by the way, contains several inspiring paragraphs on perhaps the greatest event in the life of the Jewish people—the giving of the Ten Commandments. This material, however, should not be used in class-room discussion except in the Senior Division.

The Ruth story discussed, it will be well to explain to the class that, although Ruth was probably chosen for synagogue reading on Shabuoth because of its seasonal appeal, it is a significant fact that the main theme of the glory is the acceptance of the Law of Israel by a proselyte. For in post-biblical times Shabuoth became more than a harvest festival—it became a memorial of the day on which the Ten Commandments were given.

If the Commandments have not been already learned the children of the Intermediate Division should be required to learn them by Shabuoth. After they are recited, a simple discussion of each should follow. If possible, the teacher may tell a short story to illustrate several of the Commandments which are the most difficult for a young child to understand. By all means, let her read Ginzberg's *Legends on the Giving of the Law*, adapting and amplifying them to suit her own needs. If well told, they should serve as a golden cord to link the Commandments together in the mind of the legend-loving child.

For the Senior Division the teacher should dwell chiefly upon the significance attached to Shabuoth in post-biblical times. As Dr. Kohler beautifully puts it, Shabuoth became "the Feast of the First Fruit of Israel's spiritual life, because it commemorated the day of the Giving of the Law on Mount Sinai." The agricultural side of the holiday must not be neglected, and if the child has not already learned of the omer, this is the proper place to teach him of the ancient custom; but above all must he be impressed with the fact that this festival, to quote Morris Joseph, "has

come to be the Birthday of Israel's Religion, just as Passover is the Birthday of Israel's Nationality."

The nineteenth and twentieth chapters of Exodus may be read in class, thus reviewing the Commandments. An excellent class exercise is to have each pupil write an original story, historical or modern, showing how the principal character either obeyed or disobeyed a given commandment. These stories will be moralistic to a wearisome degree, but the writers will not fail to catch the fundamental idea of the commands they are expounding.

In taking up the study of Shabuoth with confirmands or children who will be confirmed in another year, it is an easy thing to lead them to see the children of modern Israel as the "first fruits", the offerings brought on Shabuoth to Israel's altar for consecration to God's service. It is not necessary to dwell long upon this point, for the meaning of Confirmation will be fully expounded by the teacher of the Confirmation Class. But any teacher in the Senior Division should not neglect this opportunity to form another link to bind the present generation to those who at the foot of the flaming mountain pledged themselves to serve the living God.

The handwork of the older children will be to finish their scrap-books for the year, prepare decorations for the class-room or auditorium if Closing Day Exercises are to be held, and decorate programs or posters, on which either of the following Shabuoth quotations may be written:

The Law they receive from the mouth of Thy glory,
They learn and consider and understand;
Oh! accept Thou their song, and rejoice in their gladness,
Who proclaim Thy glory in every land.

—*Jehuda Halevi.*

My heart is blossoming like a flower
On Sharon's harvest field;
My heart is burning like the star
That shines on David's shield,
Because once more I see God's Law
To Israel revealed.

—*Jessie E. Sampter.*

STORIES ABOUT SHABUOTH

FOR INTERMEDIATES

Modern

"PENTECOST: OR, THE PILGRIMAGE" from "*Festival Stories*". Hannah Trager (Dutton).

Biblical

"THE LAD WHO BROUGHT NO OFFERING" from "*Playmates in Israel*". Elma Ehrlich Levinger (Jew. Pub. Soc.).

FOR SENIORS

Modern

"CLOTHES" from "*Jewish Holyday Stories*", by Elma Ehrlich Levinger (Bloch).

Historical

"THE LESSON OF THE HARVEST" from "*Stories from the Rabbis*", by Abram S. Isaacs (Bloch).

"AMID THE ALIEN CORN" from "*David the Giant Killer*", by Emily Solis-Cohen (Jew. Pub. Soc.).

"A ROSE FOR BEAUTY" from "*In Many Lands*". Elma Ehrlich Levinger (Bloch).

REFERENCES FOR HIGHEST GRADES AND TEACHERS

BIBLE: Deut., ch. 16:9-12.

Book of Ruth.

JEWISH ENCYCLOPEDIA: Pentecost and related subjects.

JEWISH LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES. Israel Abrahams
(Jew. Pub. Soc.) Page 348.

FESTIVAL STUDIES. Israel Abrahams. (Greenstone.)
Chapter 2.

LEGENDS OF THE JEWS. Louis Ginzberg. (Jew. Pub.
Soc.). Vol. III. Consult Index.

JUDAISM AS CREED AND LIFE. Morris Joseph. (Mac-
Millan.) Book II, chap. V.

GUIDE FOR INSTRUCTION IN JUDAISM. Dr. K. Kohler.
(Cowen.) Chap. 3-4, page 117.

THE SHABUOTH PROGRAM

The length and nature of the Shabuoth program depend upon two facts: (1) Whether there has been a long and elaborate program on Passover; (2) whether the school plans to have its entertainment occur the week of Shabuoth or fall upon its closing day, which is often several weeks later.

If an ambitious program has been prepared for Passover, any program for Shabuoth, whether it be devoted strictly to Shabuoth or represents general Closing Day Exercises, should be short and simple. For example, a long pageant like the author's "Let There Be Light", which would be most appropriate for a program at the end of a year's work, requires at least two months' intensive rehearsing. This would be too hard upon the coaches and the children themselves if they have just put on anything but the most informal program for Passover. One exception may be made—when the school is so large that the two entertainments are given by entirely different groups of children, under different coaches. Even then the atmosphere of too many big entertainments is usually demoralizing to the regular routine of the school.

On the other hand, if only one large entertainment has been given before Passover, that holiday being celebrated by a public Seder or informal party, there is no reason why the Shabuoth or Closing Day enter-

tainment should not be one of the most important entertainments of the whole year. For one thing, the milder weather makes it possible to present an out-of-doors pageant or spectacle; again, nothing is more effective for summing up the year's work than a dramatic summary in the form of historical dialogues, tableaux, etc., based upon the work of the different classes.

In case the simplest Closing Exercises are required, they may consist of the usual business of the Closing Session—awarding of prizes, bestowing of honorable mention, etc. A short program may follow, members of each class presenting a number suitable to Shabuoth, or at least to a Jewish Religious School. If there are a great many classes, it is always possible to combine three or more children of related grades, giving them a dialogue, or breaking up a longer recitation for them to recite, each taking a stanza. Or the same number may sing an appropriate song.

If the school is blessed with even a modest wardrobe of Biblical costumes and properties, one of the most effective “reviews” of the year's work will be “historical tableaux”. These are especially fine if the characters, while keeping their place in the picture, speak a few words. For example: Saul may be shown half reclining upon the ground, while David with drawn sword stands a little apart, a piece of Saul's garment in his hand. *David*: “Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the Lord had delivered thee today into mine hand; and some bade me kill thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed.” *Saul*: “Thou art more

righteous than I: for thou hast rendered unto me good, whereas I have rendered unto thee evil.”

The various classes should all be asked to contribute one “picture”, which should be chosen from the period studied during the year’s work. For example: Several members of the Primary Class may show Joseph restored to his father; the class above may present the Finding of Moses; the next class the bringing of the child Samuel to the Temple.

It will be readily seen that such tableaux will take very little rehearsal; no background need be used, and although a large property “book” is not expensive, and can be used again and again for tableaux, the pictures may be arranged behind drawn curtains. The title for each picture should be read clearly before the curtains are opened. Music, preferably violin, played softly during the dialogue, is always pleasing, great care being exercised lest it drown the voices of the speakers.

If these tableaux are not desired, several simple scenes of great crises in Jewish history make a good substitute. For this purpose the pageant “God is One” may be used, since certain episodes may be given on a small stage. Of course, if the program is to be devoted largely to Shabuoth, it is best to use tableaux illustrative of the story of “Ruth”, which lends itself admirably to such treatment. Or the highest classes may be persuaded to write their own play based on the Book of Ruth (see the little play in the Appendix), or members of an advanced class in Hebrew may translate the author’s playlet “Ruth of

Moab'' into Hebrew, which should be easy for any audience to follow because the story is so familiar.

Should such a summary of the year's work be given, it is always highly desirable to have an "exhibition" of the pupils' work on hand for parents and visitors to examine. This may consist of the best of the scrap-books and handwork for the various holidays, prize stories and compositions, and drawings mounted on cardboard and arranged on walls and tables, model maps and the like. Such an exhibition at regular intervals does much to arouse a child's ambition, as well as to stimulate interest in the parents.

Sometimes even a program such as the one suggested above proves for one reason or another too difficult of preparation at the end of a busy school year. In its place may be substituted a simple talk on Shabuoth and the story of Ruth, or a talk on a more general topic should Closing Day fall on a later date. Then could come the Flower Service arranged by Rabbi I. S. Moses. It may be found in his hymnal or purchased in pamphlet form of Bloch Publishing Co. It is simple and easily prepared, and, if desired, other songs and recitations may be substituted from the anthology included in this volume. The children will all enjoy bringing the flowers and arranging them on the altar. If some of the older ones are allowed to distribute them in some childrens' ward, one of the lessons of the Jewish harvest will be emphasized. On the other hand, if neither the Flower Service nor a simple miscellaneous program is desired, a few songs and recitations, carefully chosen, may be added to Children's Service VII of the Union Hymnal.

PLAYS FOR SHABUOTH

INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR DIVISIONS.....*Historical*

"*Ruth of Moab*". Elma Ehrlich Levinger. Published with this volume.

"*Let There Be Light*". • Elma Ehrlich Levinger. Published with this volume,

for which may be substituted

INTERMEDIATE DIVISION.....*Modern*

"*The Treasure in the Trunk*", three boys, three girls; a play in one scene with a lesson appropriate to Shabuoth. Wm. M. Blatt (Bloch).

Historical

"*The Lost Scroll*", four boys; a short but interesting sketch, the three scenes of which are laid in Jerusalem during the rebuilding of the Temple. Dr. Nathan Krass (Bloch).

"*The Slave from Egypt*", eight boys (the parts may be taken by girls); a picturesque little play in one scene, showing how the nations rejected the Torah while Israel accepted it. Judith Ish-Kishor (Young Judea).

INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR DIVISIONS.....*Historical*

"*God is One*", a historical pageant depicting certain striking episodes in Israel's history; written in ten scenes, it is most suitable for out-door presentation by the entire

school; if desired, only a few of the scenes need be presented. Dr. Martin A. Meyer, Milton Marks, Henry Hart (Bloch).

"The Story of the Jew in America", many speaking and minor parts; an historical pageant from the voyage of Columbus to the present day done in six scenes; if desired, may be cut or adapted. Dr. Maurice H. Harris (Bloch).

"Jephthah's Daughter", a long one-act play suitable for open-air performances; entire school may be included in dances and choruses. Elma Ehrlich Levinger (French).

"The Man with Empty Hands", eight boys, three girls, minor characters; a pageant play of the Shabuoth pilgrimage. (Has been reworked into a more ambitious spectacle under the title, *"A Pageant of Old Israel"* published by the Bureau of Jewish Education.) Elma Ehrlich Levinger (Young Judea).

"Ruth the Moabitess", three boys, three girls, minor characters; a play in three scenes which follows closely the original story. Janie Jacobson (Bloch).

"A Girl from Moab", nine boys, seven girls, minor characters; a three-act play with plenty of action, based upon the familiar narrative. Joseph Leiser (Syn. and Sch. Ex.).

"Ruth—A Harvest Pageant", four boys, two girls, many minor characters; a pageant play, especially suitable for out-of-door performances, with choruses and group dances. Eva Herbst (Syn. and Sch. Ex.).

MODEL PROGRAM FOR SHABUOTH

I

CLOSING DAY EXERCISES¹

1. Opening Song, "SUMMER SUNS ARE GLOWING",
Union Hymnal 196.....*School*
2. Children's Service.
3. Recitation, "THE MEZUZAH".....*Primary Pupil*
4. Historical Tableaux (illustrating the work of the
various classes).....*Representatives from every Class*
5. Recitation, "FLOWER OFFERING".....*Primary Pupils*
6. Song, "THERE IS A MYSTIC TIE", Union Hymnal
138 *School*
7. Reading of Honor Roll, giving of prizes, etc.
8. Closing Song, "BE WITH US AS WE LEAVE THY
HOUSE", Union Hymnal 45.....*School*

¹ Without special reference to Shabuoth.

VARIATIONS

No. 2 should consist of one of the services in the Union Hymnal with which the children are familiar (abbreviated if necessary) or the Flower Service written by Rabbi I. S. Moses, which may be purchased in pamphlet form from Bloch Pub. Co. In case a very short program is desired this number may be omitted altogether. "The Name of Israel" may be followed or replaced by the presentation of flowers and song on page 224.

No. 4 would, of course, differ in different schools, but in many cases the following titles will be found acceptable: 1. "Abraham Tells His Household of the One God." 2. "Joseph Welcomes His Father to Egypt." 3. "Moses Gives the Ten Commandments." 4. "Hannah Brings Samuel to Eli." 5. "David Appears Before Saul," 6. "Solomon Prays in His Newly Dedicated Temple." 7. "Jeremiah Defies the King and Priests." 8. "By the Waters of Babylon." A group of very fine tableaux may also be taken from the life of David.

No. 5 should be omitted if the longer flower service is used. In its stead may be recited: "The Faithful Bride" (page 226); "The Hebrew's Friday Night" (page 227); "Israel" (page 229); "Gifts" (page 231). All of these require the comprehension of a Senior.

THE MEZZUZH

When I was just a little boy,
 Not more than three or four,
 Dad showed me the small wooden box
 That hung at our front door.

It was a case of olive wood
 And held a tiny roll;
 Dad lifted me that I might see
 God's name upon the scroll.

"When great kings sleep", my daddy said,
 "Their soldiers have to arm
 And stand with swords before the door
 To guard them from all harm.

"But when a Jew has gone to bed
 Who God's commandments keeps,
 This is the sign that Israel's King
 Protects him while he sleeps."

—*Elma Ehrlich Levinger.*

FLOWER OFFERING

[Three little girls stand upon the platform with baskets; as each concludes, she receives flowers from designated classes. These are later sent to the hospitals.]

FIRST GIRL (*before receiving any flowers*):

Bring flowers, little children,
 Lilies and roses gay;
 Bring offerings from the meadows
 To grace our holiday.

Bright marigolds and daisies,
Those darlings of the spring;
And violets, shy and fragrant,
To Judah's altar bring.

SECOND GIRL:

When to the flowers so beautiful
The Father gave a name,
Back came a little blue-eyed one—
(All timidly she came);
And standing at her Father's feet,
And gazing in His face,
She said in low and trembling tones,
And with a modest grace:
"Dear God, the name thou gavest me,
Alas! I have forgot."
The Father kindly looked her down
And said, "Forget-Me-Not!"

THIRD GIRL:

The flowers fade and perish,
They die like summer's grass;
But when their petals wither
Their beauty does not pass.

For if we give our flowers
The memory cannot die;
Their fragrance lives forever,
Though summer days pass by.

[The first and third set of verses are original; the second, a familiar anonymous poem.]

—Elma Ehrlich Levinger.

THE NAME OF ISRAEL

[This may be recited by an older pupil or sung by those presenting the floral offerings, to the melody of "O, Mother Dear, Jerusalem".]

Today we bring our offering,
To give in word and deed,
That we may share, give everywhere,
To those who are in need.
For we, Thy children, Lord, would be,
Thy messengers as well,
And thus would bear, more worthily,
The name of Israel.

Thy benediction, Lord, we pray,
Bless those to whom we give;
We pledge today, in our small way,
To serve Thee while we live.
And by our efforts may we know
The joy of work done well.
All homage thus to Thee we show,
Lord God of Israel.

—*Fannie Barnett Linsky.*

THE FAITHFUL BRIDE

A MIDRASHIC PARABLE

There is a legend (and 'tis quaintly sweet),
Of man and maid, who loved long, long ago;
But fate was cruel—they were forced to part,
And she was left alone in grief and woe.

And she was left alone in grief and woe,
Nor heeded she their taunts and scornful jeers;
But in the secret vigils of the night
His letters read again with many tears.

Sweet promises, writ to her long ago—

They warmed her heart, these words of living flame;
And much men marveled, for her trust proved true;
With pomp and glory back her lover came.

“My own”, he said, “why didst thou trust in me,
When men but mocked—and I away so long?”
“Dear heart”, she said, “I read thy loving words—
Read and believed, and so my love grew strong.”

Wouldst read the moral in my simple lines?
The bride is Israel; her Beloved, He
Who ruleth heaven and earth—the Lord our God—
And she who was so sad, shall happy be.

And He shall say, “O tender rose of mine,
Which I have taken back beyond recall,
What kept alive thy simple faith in Me?”
“Thy Law, O Lord, which was my joy, my all!”

—*Anonymous.*

THE HEBREW'S FRIDAY NIGHT

Sweet Sabbath-Bride, the Hebrew's theme of praise,
Celestial maiden with the starry eyes,
Around thy head a sacred nimbus plays;
Thy smile is soft as lucent summer skies,
Before thy purity all evil dies.
In wedding robes of stainless sunshine drest,
Thou dawnest on Life's darkness and it dies;
Thy bridal-wreath is lilies, Heaven-blest,
Thy dowry, Peace and Love and Holiness and Rest.

For in Thy presence he forgets awhile
The gloom and discord of man's mortal years,
To seek the light that streameth from Thy face,

To list Thy tender lullaby, which cheers
 His soul and lies like music on his ears.
 His very sorrows with soft splendour shine,
 Transfigured by a mist of sacred tears;
 He drinks Thy gently-offered Anodyne
 And feels himself absorbed into the peace divine.

The father from the Synagogue returns,
 (A singing-bird is nestling at his heart);
 And from without the festive light discerns
 Which tells his faithful wife has done her part
 To welcome Sabbath with domestic art.
 He enters and perceives the picture true,
 And tears unbidden from his eyelids start
 As Paradise thus opens on his view,
 And then he smiles, and thanks his God he is a Jew.

For "Friday night" is written on his home
 In fair, white characters; his wife has spread
 The snowy Sabbath-cloth; the Hebrew tome,
 The flask and cup are at the table's head;
 There's Sabbath magic in the very bread,
 And royal fare the humble dishes seem;
 A holy light the Sabbath candles shed,
 Around his children's shining faces beam,
 He feels the strife of every day a far-off dream.

His buxom wife he kisses; then he lays
 Upon each child's young head two loving hands
 Of benediction, so in after days,
 When they shall be afar in other lands,
 They shall be knit to God and home by bands
 Of sacred memory. And then he makes
 The blessing o'er the wine; and while each stands,
 The quaintly convoluted bread he breaks,
 Which tastes to all tonight more sweet than honeyed cakes.

And now they eat the Sabbath meal with laugh
And jest and gossip till all fun must cease,
While father chants the grace, all singing half,
And then the Sabbath hymns of Love and Peace
And Hope from alien lands to find release.
No evil can this night its head uprear,
Earth's joys loom larger and its ills decrease;
Tonight of ghosts the youngest has no fear—
Does not his guardian Sabbath Angel hover near?

So in a thousand squalid Ghettos penned,
Engirt yet undismayed by perils vast,
The Jew in hymns that marked his faith would spend
This night, and dream of all his glorious past,
And wait the splendors by his seers forecast.
And so while mediaeval creeds at strife
With nature die, the Jew's ideals last—
The simple love of home and child and wife,
The sweet humanities which make our higher life.

—*Israel Zangwill.*

ISRAEL

How great, O Israel, have thy sufferings been
Since doomed in every land and clime to roam,
An exile and a wanderer on the earth,
Without a country and without a home!

Throughout the world men scorned the Hebrew's faith—
That holy creed of origin divine;
They stamped as crime his sacred, pure belief,
And mocked his worship at Jehovah's shrine.

And Israel, once a nation proud and great,
From whom sprang sages, kings and prophets grand,
Earth's mightiest race, the chosen of the Lord,
Was mocked and scorned and jeered in every land!

In sunny Spain the Inquisition dread
 Cast him in dungeons terrible and dire,
 And with a thousand tortures racked his form,
 Then led him forth unto the death of fire.

Where'er the Hebrew roamed, on land or sea,
 Did persecution follow in his path,
 And furious mobs deemed it a noble act
 To vent on him their hatred and their wrath.

Ten thousand martyrs died for Israel's cause
 With fortitude sublime, 'mid smoke and flame;
 And while their cruel foes stood mocking 'round,
 They called on God and blessed His sacred name!

Through all the horrors of that fearful time,
 Through gloom and death, the Hebrew saw afar,
 With faith's unfailing and undying eye,
 Beyond the clouds, hope's bright and glorious star.

He knew that God would rise 'gainst Israel's foes
 As, long ago, upon the Red Sea coast,
 With miracles He saved His chosen race,
 And in the sea 'whelmed Pharaoh's mighty host.

And gloriously was that bright trust fulfilled,
 For Israel triumphed over every foe,
 And marching on with undiminished zeal,
 Emerged in triumph from the night of woe.

Yes, Judah proudly stands, 'midst all mankind,
 Once more as beautiful, sublime, and grand
 As when, in blessed days of old, she stood
 A mighty nation in the Holy Land.

Weep not, O Israel, for thy martyred ones,
 For though no monuments rise o'er their tombs,
 Yet fame upon the sacred spot shall shed
 Her fairest garlands and her brightest blooms.

Their names are grav'n on honor's deathless page,
And on the scroll of glory written high;
And though earth's proudest monuments decay,
Their deeds sublime will never, never die!

Mourn not, O Israel, for the glorious past;
The future holds a destiny more grand;
For 'tis thy mission great to teach God's laws
To the inhabitants of every land.

And cause the nations of the world to know
That unto Him alone shall prayers ascend,
And that before His great majestic throne
All men in reverent suppliance shall bend.

Ah! may the time soon come when o'er the earth
In thunder tones the glad acclaim will ring,
And nations, taking up the shout, shall cry:
"The God of Judah is our Lord and King!"

—*Max Meyerhardt.*

GIFTS

"Oh, world-god, give me Wealth!" the Egyptian cried.
His prayer was granted. High as heaven, behold
Palace and Pyramid; the brimming tide
Of lavish Nile washed all his land with gold.
Armies of slaves toiled ant-wise at his feet;
World-circling traffic roared through mart and street;
His priests were gods; his spice-balmed kings enshrined,
Set death at naught in rock-ribbed channels deep.
Seek Pharaoh's race today, and ye shall find
Rust and the moth, silence and dusty sleep.

"Oh, world-god, give me Beauty!" cried the Greek.
 His prayer was granted. All the earth became
 Plastic and vocal to his sense; each peak,
 Each grove, each stream, quick with Promethean flame,
 Peopled the world with imaged grace light.
 The lyre was his, and his the breathing might
 Of the immortal marble; his the play
 Of diamond-pointed thought and golden tongue.
 Go seek the sunshine race, ye find today
 A broken column and a lute unstrung.

"Oh, world-god, give me Power!" the Roman cried.
 His prayer was granted. The vast world was chained
 A captive to the chariot of his pride.
 The blood of myriad provinces was drained
 To feed that fierce, insatiable red heart.
 Invulnerably bulwarked, every part,
 With serried legions and with close-meshed Code;
 Within, the burrowing worm had gnawed its home;
 A roofless ruin stands where once abode
 Th' imperial race of everlasting Rome.

"Oh, Godhead, give me Truth!" the Hebrew cried.
 His prayer was granted. He became the slave
 Of the idea, a pilgrim far and wide,
 Cursed, hated, spurned and scourged, with none to save.
 The Pharaohs knew him, and when Greece beheld
 His wisdom wore the hoary crown of Eld.
 Beauty he hath foresworn, and Wealth and Power.
 Seek him today, and find in every land;
 No fire consumes him, neither floods devour—
 Immortal through the lamp within his hand.

—*Emma Lazarus.*

MODEL PROGRAM FOR SHABUOTH

II

1. Prologue *Primary or Intermediate*
2. Song, "BEHOLD IT IS THE SPRINGTIDE OF THE YEAR",
Union Hymnal 162 *School*
3. Recitation—A Shabuoth Legend.. *Intermediate or Senior*
4. Tableau—The Ten Commandments,
Primary or Intermediates
5. Song, "UNVEIL MINE EYES THAT OF THY LAW",
Union Hymnal 102..... *School*
6. Play, "RUTH OF MOAB".
7. Closing Song, "FATHER, LET THY BLESSING",
Union Hymnal 46..... *School*

VARIATIONS

For No. 3, any of the following, appropriate for Seniors or Intermediates, may be substituted: "Abram and Zimri" (page 239); "A Story for Shabuoth" (page 241).

If no Ruth play is given for this program, for No. 4 may be substituted the Sinai episode from the author's Pageant, "Let There Be Light," "The Slave from Egypt" (see list of Shabuoth plays) or "For Love of Torah" (page 242).

If the tableau is given, the following recitation may be substituted for No. 5: "Father, See Thy Suppliant Children" (page 245).

For No. 6 in its simplest form, may be substituted one of the other versions already listed. In many cases it will be found practical to encourage the children of the highest classes to prepare their own dramatizations, which the teacher may combine and revise. (See the play of Ruth in the Appendix written by children of twelve and thirteen, with the exception of the introductory verses.) If it does not seem desirable to present a play, a series of tableaux from the Book of Ruth may be presented, followed by Gaul's solo, "Entreat Me Not to Leave Thee" or one of the following recitations: "Ruth" (page 246); "Ruth and Naomi" (page 247).

PROLOGUE FOR SHABUOTH

[To be given as the first number of a Shabuoth entertainment.]

In far-off days when our Jerusalem
 Was as a queen of cities, and her fame
 Filled stranger kings with envy, pilgrims glad
 Unto her golden gates with offering came.

First fruits they bore—the firstlings of the flock,
 The first fruits of the ploughed field and the tree—
 And laid them on the altar of our God
 In olden days—but what today bring we?

No fruits have we to bring—no lambs—no doves—
 Yet we this votive feast with singing greet;
 Though Israel no longer seeks her shrine
 To lay her offerings at her Maker's feet.

We children are the "first fruits", and today
 We lay our lives on Israel's hallowed shrine,
 And pray: "Oh, Holy One, receive our hearts:
 Bless Thou our toil for Israel—make it Thine!"

—*Elma Ehrlich Levinger.*

SHABUOTH

'Twas at our Cheder, just last week,
 I learned about Shabuoth;
 Our teacher said if we were still
 He would explain it to us.

Then we were just as still as mice—
 We like to hear a story,
 And best of all are those, of course,
 That tell of Israel's glory.

Shabuoth is the Feast of Weeks—
You'll find with careful counting,
From first of Pesach to this time—
The weeks to seven amounting.

And teacher told us how the Jews
Were in the desert tramping,
And when they came to Sinai's Mount
They rested there for camping.

But when they heard the Shofar sound,
And saw the mountain shaking
And smoking like a furnace, too,
With fear they all were quaking.

Then Moses climbed the mountain-side
And soon from sight was hidden,
While they remained at Sinai's foot
As they, by God, were bidden.

"Our Leader's been so long up there",
The people were declaring,
When down the mountain Moses came,
The Ten Commandments bearing.

So that is why we keep this day,
Because on it were given
Those Ten Commandments that God wrote
Upon the sixth of Sivan.

—*Miriam Myers.*

A SHABUOTH LEGEND

When spring flushed all the fields of Palestine
 With living beauty till they sang to God,
 The men of Judah crossed their ancient hills
 With goodly fruits unto Jerusalem,
 To lay upon the altar of the Lord.

Then Reuben called to him his only son,
 Ephraim, a lad just come to fourteen year,
 Called him unto his couch and spake with him:
 "Ephraim, since thou wast a little child
 Thou hast gone with me to Jerusalem
 To keep the Shabuoth feast our fathers knew.
 Today I lie upon a bed of pain
 And cannot place my foot upon the floor;
 How can I journey to Jerusalem?
 Thou knowest, too, how lean the year has been:
 How all the lambs did with their mothers die,
 How hail and frost shed blight upon our fields;
 No offering have I, neither lamb nor grain,
 Naught but this fruit to give unto the Lord.
 Yet He will not reject the humble gift
 Of one who thanks Him even in his pain!
 Go thou, my son, and take thy shoes and staff,
 And go alone unto Jerusalem
 And place my tithe before the living God,
 Who sendeth both the harvest and the blight."
 Thus Reuben spoke, and kissed the boy with tears.

The morning rose above the dewy hills,
 And Ephraim, with traveler's staff in hand,
 His fruits within a basket on his arm,
 Bedeck'd with leaves to ward the noonday sun,
 Took the white road unto Jerusalem.

The brown birds sang a welcome as he came;
The sun rose in his glory like a king,
And all the world was as a garden fair,
A-flush with spring beneath the stainless sky,
And Ephraim's heart sang happy songs to God.
But as he neared the towers of that place
Where David dwelt, our own beloved king,
The day grew chill with horror, and the birds
Seemed dumb as the sick heart within his breast,
For in his path a cringing leper stood.
Rags clothed his shaking limbs; his hopeless eyes
Glared at the boy and made him sore afraid,
Although his voice was gentle when he spoke:
"My lad, though one of Israel, all these years
Set by my sickness as a thing apart,
I have not dared to seek the holy place
E'en when my brethren sacrificed to God.
But yester as I slept beside the rock
In yonder woods, a vision came to me,
And with my ears long-dulled I heard Him speak.
" 'My son', thus spoke the Lord, 'hast thy poor soul
Grown bitter toward me in thy lonely pain,
That thou no longer comest with gifts to me,
With offerings from the press and tree and field?'
And Him I answered, strangely unafraid:
'But Lord, can I, a leper sore-accursed,
Mingle with men and worship in Thy shrine?'
He answered kindly: 'Seek and thou wilt find.
For I, too, dwell beneath the open sky
As well as in My Temple on the hill.
Build thou an altar to Me in the wood,
Where I will heed thy loving sacrifice.'
But I in shame: 'O Lord, what grain have I,
What wine and oil, what fruit from mine own tree?
How can I bring Thee worthy sacrifice?'

He answered: 'Is there aught too hard for Me?
 Build thou the altar and I will provide
 A sacrifice by sunrise.' Then I woke
 And, half-asleep, did falter till I came
 To thee, my lad, with offerings on thine arm.
 Give me thy fruit, that I may place it straight
 Upon my altar as He gave command!"

But Ephraim answered: "Can I give it thee,
 When I now journey to Jerusalem
 To lay before the Lord my sacrifice?"

"Child", said the leper, "I am old and sad;
 Rob me not of the joy of serving Him;
 Give me thy fruits—for He will understand."

Then Ephraim, with pity in his heart,
 Placed his dear fruit beside the dusty road
 (Knowing he dared not touch the leper's hand),
 And, with his empty basket on his arm,
 Journeyed until he reached Jerusalem.

And there he stood before the waiting priest,
 His tanned face hot with shame, his eyes cast down;
 He tried to stammer how he loathed to come
 With empty hands unto the House of God;
 But in surprise the priest did answer him:
 "My lad, thy basket well-nigh overflows
 With fruit so fresh and fragrant one might deem
 It grew within the garden of the Lord:
 Such fruit I never saw on earthly tree."

And Ephraim, gazing on his basket, saw
 That it was filled with fruit all dewy sweet—
 Such fruit as never graced his father's trees.

Then Ephraim gave his offering to the Lord,
 And took his staff in hand and journeyed home,
 And as he went his heart sang songs to God.

—*Elma Ehrlich Levinger.*

ABRAM AND ZIMRI

Abram and Zimri owned a field together—
A level field hid in a happy vale;
They plowed it with one plow, and in the spring
Sowed, walking side by side, the fruitful seed.
In harvest, when the glad earth smiled with grain,
Each carried to his home one-half the sheaves,
And stored them with much labor in his barns.
Now Abram had a wife and seven sons
But Zimri dwelt alone within his house.

One night, before the sheaves were gathered in,
As Zimri lay upon his lonely bed
And counted in his mind his little gains,
He thought upon his brother Abram's lot,
And said: "I dwell alone within my house,
But Abram hath a wife and seven sons,
And yet we share the harvest sheaves alike;
He surely needeth more for life than I;
I will arise and gird myself, and go
Down to the field, and add to his from mine."

So he arose, and girded up his loins,
And went out softly to the level field.
The moon shone out from dusky bars of clouds,
The trees stood black against the cold blue sky,
The branches waved and whispered in the wind.
So Zimri, guided by the shifting light,
Went down the mountain path and found the field,
Took from his store of sheaves a generous third,
And bore them gladly to his brother's heap,
And then went back to sleep and happy dreams.

Now, that same night, as Abram lay in bed,
Thinking upon his blissful state in life,
He thought upon his brother Zimri's lot,

And said: "He dwells within his house alone,
And goeth forth to toil with few to help,
And goeth home at night to a cold house,
And hath few other friends but me and mine"
(For these two tilled the happy vale alone)—
"While I, whom Heaven hath very greatly blessed,
Dwell happy with my wife and seven sons,
Who aid me in my toil, and make it light,
And yet we share the harvest sheaves alike.
This surely is not pleasing unto God;
I will arise, and gird myself, and go
Out to the field and borrow from my store,
And add unto my brother Zimri's pile."

So he arose and girded up his loins,
And went down softly to the level field;
The moon shone out from silver bars of clouds,
The trees stood black against the starry sky,
The dark leaves waved and whispered in the breeze;
So Abram, guided by the doubtful light,
Passed down the mountain path, and found the field,
Took from his store of sheaves a generous third,
And added them unto his brother's heap;
Then he went back to sleep and happy dreams.

So the next morning, with the early sun,
The brothers rose, and went out to their toil;
And when they came to see the heavy sheaves,
Each wondered in his heart to find his heap,
Though he had given a third, was still the same.

Now the next night went Zimri to the field,
Took from his store of sheaves a generous share
And placed them on his brother Abram's heap,
And then lay down behind his pile to watch.
The moon looked down from bars of silvery clouds,
The cedars stood up black against the sky,
The olive branches whispered in the wind.

Then Abram came down softly from his home,
And, looking to the right and left, went on;
Took from his ample store a generous third,
And laid it on his brother Zimri's pile.
Then Zimri rose and caught him in his arms,
And wept upon his neck, and kissed his cheek;
And Abram saw the whole, and could not speak;
Neither could Zimri, so they walked along
Back to their homes, and thanked their God in prayer
That He had bound them in such loving bands.

—*Clarence Cook.*

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A STORY FOR SHABUOTH

An old Hebrew story tells us how a poor man one day came to the Temple from a sick bed on tottering limbs. He was ashamed to come, for he was very poor and had no sacrifice to offer. As he drew near, he heard the loud choir chanting: "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Other worshippers came, passed before him and offered their sacrifices; but he had none. But at length he respectfully prostrated himself before the priest, who said: "What wilt thou, my son; hast thou an offering?" And he replied: "No, my father, for last night a poor widow and her children came to me, and I had nothing to offer them but the two pigeons which were ready for the sacrifice." "Bring, then", said the priest, "an ephah of fine flour." "Nay, but, my father", said the old man, "this day my sickness and poverty have left only enough for my starving children. I have not even an ephah of flour." "Why, then, art thou come to me?" said the priest. "Because I heard them singing: 'The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit.' Will He not accept my sacrifice if

I say, 'Lord be merciful to me a sinner?'" And the priest lifted the old man from the ground, and he said: "Yes, thou art blessed, my son; it is thy offering which is better than thousands of rivers of oil."

—*Adapted.*

SHABUOTH TABLEAU—THE LAW

[Adapted from *Mrs. M. H. Heniger*]

This tableau may be given by arranging ten little girls in two lines of five each (gradually diminishing in size) before two ironing-boards covered with white. The first two girls kneel, the next two kneel on low stools, the third stand, the fourth stand on low stools, the fifth on higher stools, each behind the other. The children are dressed in white flowing robes, with white bands about their loose hair, each band decorated by a large blue Roman numeral. The two children nearest the boards have I and VI, the next two II and VII, etc. As the curtains are drawn each child either recites to music or chants her commandment. The line may be given in Hebrew or English, and it will be well to arrange a chorus that at the close may sing the familiar "May the words of my mouth", etc.

FOR LOVE OF TORAH

SCENE ONE

[*Rabbi Akiba and Pappus. Akiba is seated on the ground, studying in a big old Hebrew Tome. Pappus stands behind him. Both have long, flowing, light-colored robes, beards and caps.*]

PAPPUS: Rabbi Akiba, dear, dear friend,
 Will not your courage ever end,
 And prudence take its place awhile?
 Were I not weeping, I could smile
 To see you love the Torah so
 That Roman laws you do not know.

AKIBA: I know the Roman laws indeed—
Therefore I study with such speed
They say: Who studies Torah, dies.

PAPPUS: Rabbi Akiba, is it wise
For Torah's sake that you should die
And leave us others—such as I—
All your students here, indeed,
Without a teacher in their need?
Not so do I. In Roman grace
I will retain an honored place,
Not less a Jew because I try
To live a Jew, and not to die.

AKIBA: Pappus, my friend, as you think good
So do. As for my hardihood,
It is but common sense, that's all.
A little story I recall
Of little fishes in a stream.
To them said Mr. Fox: "You seem
Contented there, but bigger fish
Will make of you a toothsome dish.
Therefore, I beg you, friends, arise!
Live with me on dry land! Be wise!"
The fish replied: "Your kind advice
We cannot take. The land is nice,
And danger's here on every hand,
But fishes cannot live on land."

[*rising*]

So, Pappus, Jews without their law
Are no more Jews. You know I saw
Bar-Kochba's rise and fall; I know
The height of hope, the depth of woe,
And this I know beyond all doubt:
Torah we cannot live without!
Our liberty, our tongue, our land—
The Torah bears them in her hand.

The Torah says: "Hold fast to me
 And once again you shall be free."
 The Torah is the holy rod
 That works the miracles of God.
 Therefore, dear Pappus, though I die,
 The Torah lives—and what am I?
 As for your safety—pray beware—
 The land is safe, but Fox is there.

(CURTAIN)

SCENE TWO

[Rabbi Akiba walking to and fro in his cell awaiting execution. He has chains on his hands and feet and his clothes are tattered.]

AKIBA (*with face uplifted*):

I thank thee, Lord, that now I will
 Have power Thy Torah to fulfil.
 Never before could I aright
 Love Thee with heart and soul and might.
 But now by death that mighty love
 With this poor body I will prove.

[Enter Pappus, also with chains and disheveled]

AKIBA: Pappus! a prisoner! No! But why?

PAPPUS: Akiba, I am doomed to die. [*weeps*]

AKIBA: It grieves me much. What was the cause?

PAPPUS: I broke some trivial Roman laws,
 Unknowingly, no matter how—
 I envy you, Akiba, now!

AKIBA: You envy me? But what have I?
 I'll give you all before I die.

PAPPUS: Then give—for death a noble cause,
Your loyalty to Jewish laws,
Your fearlessness, your faith divine!

AKIBA: Those are the Torah's, and not mine.

PAPPUS: Akiba, how I envy you!

AKIBA: I am your friend, what can I do?

PAPPUS: Nothing! Still of myself I think!
Give me the Torah; let me sink
Into the living stream, where dwell
The Jews who live and die so well!
The Fox has caught me on dry land,
And now, too late, I understand!

AKIBA: Never too late! You still must die,
For some few hours still you and I
Can sit down here, together, friend,
And speak of Torah to the end.

[They sit down together. Curtain falls]

—*Jessie E. Sampter.*

FATHER, SEE THY SUPPLIANT CHILDREN

Father, see thy suppliant children
Trembling stand before Thy throne,
To confirm the vow of Horeb:
“We will serve the Lord alone.”

Thy command shall be engraven
On the tablets of our heart,
Till the heart in death be broken,
Till the cord of life shall part.

As a sheltering cloud at noontide,
As a flaming fire by night,
Through prosperity and sorrow
It will guide our steps aright.

Till we reach the Land of Promise,
 When the toils of earth are past,
 Till we sleep the sleep eternal
 In the realms of peace at last.

—*Felix Adler.*

RUTH

She stood breast-high amid the corn,
 Clasp'd by the golden light of morn,
 Like the sweetheart of the sun
 Who many a glowing kiss had won.

On her cheek an autumn flush
 Deeply ripened—such a blush
 In the midst of brown was born
 Like red poppies grown with corn.

Round her eyes her tresses fell—
 Which were blackest none could tell;
 But long lashes veiled a light
 That had else been all too bright.

And her hat, with shaded brim,
 Made her tressy forehead dim—
 Thus she stood among the stooks,
 Praising God with sweetest looks.

Sure, I said, Heaven did not mean
 Where I reap thou shouldst but glean;
 Lay thy sheaf adown and come, .
 Share my harvest and my home.

—*Thomas Hood.*

RUTH AND NAOMI

Entreat me not to leave thee, mother dear,
Nor to return from following after thee,
For thou henceforth must learn to lean on me;
And when thou callest I shall ever hear.
Where'er thou goest, thou shalt find me near,
And where thou lodgest, there my lodge shall be.
The God thou lovest—e'en my God is He,
And 'neath His wings what danger can I fear?
Where thou, my mother, diest, will I die,
And in our deaths our love shall bind us still,
For where they bury thee, there will I lie;
To be with thee forever is my will.
Ah! may thy God deal heavily with me,
If even death doth part thy Ruth from thee!

—*Elma Ehrlich Levinger.*

MODEL PROGRAM FOR SHABUOTH

III

- 1. Opening Song, "GOD OF ISRAEL, KEEP US FAITHFUL",
Union Hymnal 206.....*School*
- 2. Brief Story of the Pageant.....*Rabbi or Teacher*
- 3. Pageant.....*Primary, Intermediate, Senior Divisions*
- 4. Closing Songs, "EN KELOHENU" (246) and "AMERICA"
226 *Audience*

VARIATIONS

No. 3. If an elaborate pageant summing up something of the year's historical teaching is desired the author's "Let There Be Light" or "God Is One" will be found appropriate. In Dr. Harris's pageant the incidents deal with the history of the Jew in America. If a pastoral pageant suitable for Shabuoth is contemplated, Miss Herbst's pageant play or the author's "Ruth of Moab" (with the introduction of songs and harvest dances as suggested in the Notes to the Producer) should be found most desirable.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

Original Pantomime Burlesque of Purim Story for Purim
Parties—*Elma Ehrlich Levinger*

Judas the Maccabee.....*Richard David Goldstone*

Play of Ruth,

Written by *Children of Isaiah Sabbath School, Chicago*

APPROPRIATE ENTERTAINMENT FOR PURIM PARTY

ESTHER IN SHADOWLAND

A PANTOMIME BURLESQUE FOR PURIM

By *Elma Ehrlich Levinger*

[NOTE: The actors all appear behind a sheet with a lamp so arranged that their shadows are thrown against it in bold relief. They should be instructed to exaggerate their gestures and postures as much as possible. Makeshift costumes producing absurd effects on the screen should be worn; *e. g.*, Ahasuerus should wear a very tall crown, Haman a long train to his costume, which will continually trip him, etc. The burlesque effect will be heightened if “*incidental*” music is played—“creepy music” for entrance of Haman as villain, a stirring march for the king, “*Hearts and Flowers*”, or something closely akin, for Esther. It may be found necessary, in some cases, to omit scenes VI and VII, which are inclined to drag unless very well played.]

SCENE I.—King, Haman, courtiers enter. All bow to king. Raise huge goblets which they pretend to drain. Haman points off stage. King nods and taps courtier on shoulder. He bows and exits. All exeunt.

SCENE II.—Vashti enters with several maids quarreling to carry her train. Looks in mirror one holds before her, while other powders her face for her. Courtier enters, kneels, begs her to follow him to feast. She refuses, leaves haughtily, followed by her maids.

SCENE III.—Enter king and court. Enter courtier. Tells of Vashti's refusal to come. King's rage. Sends messenger off for crown. Courtier enters carrying Vashti's crown. King points to it, and sends out courtiers to find new queen.

SCENE IV.—Enter king and court. He sits on throne, assisted by Haman. Maidens pass before them, each in turn bowing low, Esther last. King waves off each in turn, sees Esther, shows joy, rushes down and seizes her hand. Puts crown on her head. Rejoicing. Exeunt.

SCENE V.—Courtiers enter a little after Haman in solemn march. All march about him, bowing very low. He inclines his head haughtily. They leave. Enter Mordecai, who attempts to pass him. Haman orders him to bow. Mordecai passes him, nose in air. Haman shakes his fist after him; leaves stage in great anger.

SCENE VI.—King and attendants enter. He yawns and stretches; sits on throne; orders attendant to read to him. Suddenly shows much interest. Enter Haman, who bows low to king. King asks how he can raise a certain man high above the people. Haman turns aside and points to himself complacently. Suggests that such a man should wear the king's crown and robe and ride his horse. King tells him to seek Mordecai, who is to

be so honored. Haman leaves in great rage. Others follow, laughing.

SCENE VII.—Courtiers enter and bow before Mordecai, wearing king's robe, etc. Haman follows in great rage, shaking his fist at Mordecai.

SCENE VIII.—King enters; sits on throne. Haman enters; shakes hands with king—then remembers his position and kneels; shows him bag of gold; makes gesture of sweeping Jews out of kingdom. King nods languidly and gives him ring. They go off arm in arm.

SCENE IX.—Esther enters with two maids. One reads to her as she sits, one fans her. Mordecai enters, beating his breast and tearing his hair. Esther comes to him and shows surprise. They go off lamenting together; the maids follow, weeping.

SCENE X.—King and court enter, Haman strutting last. King sits on throne. Esther enters, but hesitates at entrance, even fainting in the arms of her two attendants. King holds out his scepter, which she seizes as she kneels before him. He offers her gifts—his crown and chain. She shakes her head, points to Haman and denounces him. King threatens Haman with scepter. The courtiers seize him and drag him off. Mordecai enters. King gives him a ring. All go off rejoicing.

JUDAS THE MACCABEE

How every heart must swell to be
As great as Judas Maccabee;
When Antiochus, the tyrant king,
Expected the Jews his praise to sing,

Then up came Judas and his band,
And blew the trumpet through the land;
The Jewish people, far and wide,
Flocked in scores to the leader's side.

The motto on the banners ran,
"The Lord is with me, I fear no man."
Behind the bushes and the trees
And shrubs then ran the Maccabees.

Then came the Greeks, and, glad to tell,
The Jews they fought, and the Greeks they fell;
So follow this motto if you can,
"The Lord is with me, I fear no man."

—*Richard David Goldstone,*
(9 years), Temple Emanu El Sabbath School, New York.

RUTH—A STORY OF THE HARVEST

A PLAY IN THREE ACTS

By *Leona Bachrach, Charles Pesorowsky and Eugene Solomon*

CAST OF CHARACTERS:

RUTH.....*A Moabite Girl*
 NAOMI*A Widowed Mother*
 ORPAH.....*Sister-in-law of Ruth*
 A WOMAN OF BETHLEHEM
 BOAZ*A Wealthy Farmer*
 A KINSMAN TO RUTH'S HUSBAND
 FIRST REAPER.
 SECOND REAPER.
 THIRD REAPER.
 JOSEPH*A Messenger*
 AN OLD MAN

PROLOGUE:¹

Leave this gray city with its greed and grime
 To view the story of an ancient time;
 No longer do the engines pant and roar,
 We hear the clamor of the streets no more—
 The fields are smiling 'neath the harvest sun,
 From moss-green rocks cool rills of water run;
 The birds are singing from the grateful leaves,
 The sun-browned reapers bend above the sheaves;
 And in this pleasant Land of Long Ago,
 We modern Jewish children mean to show
 How steadfast Ruth, her weary wanderings past,
 Found love and peace and plenty at the last.

ACT I

[Scene—*The Land of Moab*]

NAOMI (*alone*): I am no longer happy since my sons
 and husband have died. If there had been no famine, they

¹ Written by the teacher.

would be living yet. My daughters-in-law have been upset, too. Why! Here they come now. [*Enter Ruth and Orpah*] I am going back to Bethlehem. I don't feel at home here. Return, my daughters, and may the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead and with me.

RUTH (*weeping*): Oh, mother! Let me stay with thee! I will return with thee.

ORPAH: Yea! I too go where my mother goeth.

NAOMI: Nay. Have I more sons to be husbands for you? Go where ye came from and start a new life. Marry again, and don't talk about my sons. Just remember their names.

ORPAH: We will return to thy native land with thee.

NAOMI: No, my daughters; turn again, go your way. It grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the Lord hath gone forth against us.

ORPAH (*kissing her*): Good-bye, O mother, I will go my way; yea, return to my people as thou hast bidden me. Good-bye. [*Exit*]

NAOMI: Behold! Thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people and unto her gods. Return thou after thy sister-in-law.

RUTH: Entreat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest, I will die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.

NAOMI: Thou art but a child, but alas, thou shalt return to my birthplace, and we will die in peace.

RUTH: Blessed art thou for the gentle words that come from thy lips. [*Exeunt Ruth and Naomi*]

(END OF ACT I)

ACT II

[Scene—*Bethlehem. A field wherein reapers are at work gathering the grain. Enter Naomi and Ruth.*]

WOMAN: Is this Naomi?

NAOMI: Call me not Naomi, which is pleasant, but Mara, the bitter, seeing that the Almighty hath given bitterness to me. I went out full, but the Lord brought me back empty.

RUTH: Dear mother, it is of no use to bemoan our fate. I will stay in this field and gather the gleanings which the Almighty has preserved for us.

NAOMI: Stay, then, my child, and God be with thee.
[*Exit Naomi*]

FIRST REAPER: 'Tis said our master, Boaz, will visit our field today. He should be pleased, for never was there a better harvest.

SECOND REAPER: He deserves his good fortune, for he is as generous as he is rich.

THIRD REAPER: Is not that woman who left of his kindred?

WOMAN: Ay! She is Naomi, whose husband and sons have left her desolate in her old age.

BOAZ (*entering*): The Eternal be with thee this fair day.

REAPERS: The Eternal bless thee and shield thee from all harm.

BOAZ: How cometh this maiden here who picketh up the sheaves of barley and stray ears of wheat?

FOURTH REAPER: She has just come, and we were loath to drive her away.

FIRST REAPER: 'Tis a Moabite maiden.

SECOND REAPER: Yea, who is kin to Naomi.

THIRD REAPER: And 'tis said has lost her husband.

BOAZ: Come hither, maiden. Have no fear.

RUTH: Let me glean, I pray thee, and gather after the reapers among the sheaves.

BOAZ: Thou dost not need to wander through this field, but rest, as I have heard thou art kindred to me. Break bread with me, and when thou art athirst go unto the vessels and drink of that which the young men have drawn.

RUTH (*falling on her knees*): Why have I found favor in thy sight? I am a stranger to thee.

BOAZ: It hath fully been showed to me all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thy husband in the land of thy nativity, and how thou hast come unto a people that thou knewest not heretofore.

RUTH: Let me find favor in thy sight, my lord, for that thou hast comforted me and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like one of thine handmaidens.

BOAZ: Bring thou the vail thou hast upon thee, and I will fill it with six measures of barley. [*Gives her the barley and turns to the reapers*] Let her glean even among the sheaves and reproach her not. And also pull out some for her from the bundles, and let her glean, and rebuke her not.

RUTH: Praised be the God of Israel, who hath caused thee to be gracious unto thy poor handmaiden! [*Exit Ruth*] [*Boaz looks after her. The reapers resume work*]

(END OF ACT II)

ACT III

[Scene—*Bethlehem; the City Gate*]

NAOMI (*entering*): It is past sunset, and Ruth has not returned. Here she comes now, tired from the day's work. [*Ruth enters*] What has happened, my daughter?

RUTH (*showing her vail*): These six measures of barley gave Boaz to me. And he spake kindly and bade me break bread with him.

NAOMI: Be at rest, my daughter. The man will not be in rest until he has finished the thing this day. [*Exeunt Ruth and Naomi*]

BOAZ (*enters and sits by the gate*): How generous, courageous and faithful thou art to thy mother-in-law, sweet Ruth. I would like thee for my wife. The reapers have left some corn and barley for thee this day, that thou and thy mother need not go hungry. [*Calls*] Joseph!

JOSEPH (*entering*): What wilt thou, master?

BOAZ: Go thou into the city and get the elders of the city and also the kinsman of Ruth.

JOSEPH: My feet are like wings. [*Exit Joseph*]

BOAZ: It is a law in Israel that if I buy the inheritance of Ruth's husband, instead of the next of kin buying it, I shall be free to marry her. [*Enter Ruth*] The Eternal be with thee.

RUTH: The Eternal be with thee also.

BOAZ: Wilt thou marry me, Ruth?

RUTH: Yea, would I answer anything else when thou hast given us everything that makes life?

[*Enter Naomi, kinsman, people of Bethlehem*]

BOAZ (*to kinsman*): Wilt thou buy the land of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, and take her to wife, since thou art next of kin?

KINSMAN: I cannot redeem it for myself lest I mar mine own inheritance. Redeem it thyself, for I cannot redeem it.

BOAZ: Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that belonged to the husband of Ruth.

ALL: We are witnesses.

WOMAN: Surely is Naomi well named, for henceforth shall her days be very pleasant unto her.

KINSMAN: The Lord make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and Leah, which two did build the house of Israel. And do thou worthily in Ephratah and be famous in Bethlehem.

OLD MAN (*blessing Ruth*): Thy name shall never perish in Israel, for thy son shall be father to the first of many kings. This king shall be the "Beloved" of his people, and through him shall the land be blessed. And it shall come to pass in the later days, when our people are scattered, that they shall dream of this king and pray for his return.

NAOMI: Art thou happy, Ruth?

RUTH: The Lord hath dealt kindly with me, and I am very happy.

(*THE END*)

Part II

PLAYS, PAGEANTS, AND TABLEAUX

BY

Elma Ehrlich Levinger

HOW SUCCOTH CAME TO CHAYIM

A MODERN PLAY

IN ONE ACT

NOTES TO THE PRODUCER

This is essentially a children's play, and the children in it are to act as naturally and unaffectedly as possible. The characters of the father and mother and postman should be taken by older children. Jack may be played by an older child, but should be small for his age.

The children should be dressed as country children in comfortable circumstances. The little girls should be of different types: Sadie with short curly hair and a round face; Lucy with sharp features and long braids. Ted should be light, Chayim considerably darker and less sturdy.

There should be no attempt at realism in the kitchen. Have the cooking done in the "summer kitchen" and omit the stove and sink. If no cupboard can be secured, have the characters go off stage for dishes and food. The necessary furniture will be: several chairs, a large table, a sofa (if possible, otherwise substitute a large arm-chair and have child sit on the arm) and hooks for outdoor clothing.

There should be at least several rehearsals with the Succah, each child being assigned definite tasks, that at the actual performance there is no confusion, and the building can be performed quickly and efficiently. For the father and Ted, try to secure two Boy Scouts or boys who have had some manual training; make them responsible for the building.

The lamp should have a solid base, that it cannot be upset easily, while confetti or "tinsel" will give the effect of snow during the early part of the scene. Layers of white mosquito netting, with bars done in charcoal, can be arranged on back wall to represent window covered with snow.

The amount of Hebrew used for the last scene should be left to the discretion of the director. Even a child with no knowledge of the language can be taught the first of the traditional blessings.

CHARACTERS

SAM ROSENBERG*A Prosperous Farmer*
TED, 12 }
SADIE, 9 }*His Children*
LUCY, 8 }
JACK, 4 }
MARY ROSENBERG*His Wife*
CHAYIM PERL, 12.....*His Nephew*
TOM CHRISLER*The Rural Postman*

TIME—*The present.*

PLACE—*A farm-house in northern Minnesota.*

How Succoth Came to Chayim

The scene should show a kitchen, plainly but cozily furnished, a rag rug on the floor, a cheery chintz curtain drawn back from a window which is white with frost. Two doors, one at right of spectator to lead out on porch; one to left into sitting room.

When curtain rises we see Sam Rosenberg, a man about fifty, in the working clothes of a practical farmer, sitting in the rocker reading a newspaper. Now and then he stops and drinks from the cup that stands on the table at his elbow; the table is covered with a red cloth, and on it stand a coffee pot, several cups and a plate of apples. There is a knock at the outer door. Stretching himself lazily, for he has been nodding over his paper, Rosenberg saunters to door. He opens it and admits Tom Chrisler, a young man in a storm coat and rough hat. He carries several letters and newspapers in his hand.

Rosenberg: Hello, Tom (*taking letters*). Thanks. Why didn't you leave 'em in the box?

Tom: One of your wild kids must have bent the cover off, and I didn't want your mail to get wet with snow (*laughs and takes off his hat, from which he shakes the snowflakes*). A snow-storm in October. That's going some! My grandfather says he don't remember one since he was a boy, and *then* it snowed in September (*taking off his gloves and rubbing his hands as he gazes hintfully at coffee pot*). And cold for October! Kinda weather you wish you didn't have to be a mailman, but could sit around home and drink coffee all day.

Rosenberg (*pouring him out a cup*): Take some—it's good and warm (*going to window*). If the snow keeps on, it's going to make the roads mighty bad. Maybe it's the slush that makes the children get home from school late (*glancing up at clock*).

Tom (*drinking coffee and helping himself to an apple*): You got three going to school now, haven't you? And the baby? (*Rosenberg nods.*) Should think you had enough troubles of your own without going to Europe for another one.

Rosenberg (*sitting down and beginning to draw on shoes he exchanges for his slippers*): Oh, you mean little Chayim? He's not any trouble.

Tom: He's related to you, isn't he?

Rosenberg (*rising*): Yes—my brother's little boy. You see, I left the old country when I was just a boy. My brother was killed in the war and his wife died (*sighs*). We Jews are used to stories like that by this time. Just by luck, I heard of Chayim before they put him in an orphan asylum, and I got him over here. He goes to school with my children every day and seems to like it. And he's learned to talk English in no time.

Tom: So he's getting used to America?

Rosenberg (*putting on coat and hat he takes from door*): Sometimes I think so—and again I don't. Lately he's been so quiet and down in the mouth that I'm afraid he's sick or something. Well, I've got to be going to feed the stock. It gets dark early these snowy days.

Tom (*putting on his hat*): And if I don't hurry they'll be yelling all along the road for their mail (*following Rosenberg through the outer door*). Guess the children are turning in the gate now.

Rosenberg (*reaching back to close the door*): Yes.

(*For a moment the stage is empty. Then with loud shouts and much laughing, two girls and two boys rush upon the stage from the outer door. TED is a manly chap, tall for his age, slow and dependable; SADIE is plump and rosy and motherly; LUCY is slight and quick and sharp of tongue; CHAYIM, who enters last, is small for his years, timid and thoughtful, pale and thin, with the manner of one who in spite of his present kind treatment cannot forget the harshness of the past. They remove their wraps, flecked with snow, and hang them on the hooks on the door as they laugh and talk together.*)

Ted: Told you I'd beat you all racing up from the gate.

Lucy (*sharply*): You didn't—you got the head start.

Ted: Didn't.

Lucy (*slapping him*): You did!

Sadie (*in her pleasant way*): Now what's the use of fighting? (*as her mother enters the room*) Mamma, I got 100 in spelling today.

(*MRS. ROSENBERG is a pleasant-faced woman in a neat house-dress; she carries little JACK, who would be a very nice boy if he didn't whine so much. Just now he is very good-natured, as he has bit his way to the middle of a big slice of bread and jelly.*)

Mrs. Rosenberg: That's nice. (*Goes to cupboard and brings out a plate of cookies and pitcher of milk.*) You're not hungry, are you?

Children (*laughing*): Oh—no! (*They cluster about the table as she serves them, little JACK pushing aside the others to get there first.*)

Jack (*shrieking*): Give me apple—give me cookies—give me milk.

Mrs. Rosenberg (*catching him*): No, no—baby, you've had lunch. (*She holds him in her lap apart from the others,*

who eat and laugh and talk together. Then she notices that CHAYIM has taken an apple and gone to the sofa, where he sits brooding.)

Mrs. Rosenberg (*going to sit next to him*): What's the matter, Chayim—don't you want any lunch?

Chayim (*with a slight accent*): No'm—thank you.

Lucy (*from table, as though accusing him*): And he didn't eat hardly anything at school this noon, either.

Chayim (*miserably, wishing they'd let him alone*): I wasn't hungry.

Ted: And he wouldn't play tag at recess.

Chayim: I didn't feel like playing.

Mrs. Rosenberg (*fussing over him*): Dear—dear—I hope you're not going to be sick. That's just the way Sadie came down with the measles. Let me see your tongue. (*He obeys.*) And you don't seem to have any fever (*feeling his forehead*).

Chayim (*embarrassed*): I don't feel sick.

Mrs. Rosenberg: Then what's the matter with you? Has Lucy hurt your feelings again?

Lucy (*indignantly*): I never said a word to him!

Chayim: No'm.

Mrs. Rosenberg: Have you had any trouble at school?

Chayim: No'm. The children are all nice to me, and the teacher is good, too. (*Proudly*) Today I read a whole page in the reader without making a mistake.

Mrs. Rosenberg: Then what is the matter?

Jack (*having finished his bread and jelly*): I want more bread—I want more jelly.

Mrs. Rosenberg (*horrified*): You've got jelly all over your face—(*surveying him closer*)—and look at your romper! (*Rising*) I'll have to change it.

Jack: I'm not a dirty boy. (*Finishes his romper by wiping his messy hands on it and beginning to whine at the prospect of getting cleaned up.*) I don't want to get washed.

Mrs. Rosenberg (*carrying Jack off left*): Be a good boy now.

Jack (*his whine rising higher*): I don't want to be a good boy—I want jelly.

(*Chayim, seeing that the group about the table are still busy with their lunch, starts to follow.*)

Sadie: Where're you going?

Chayim: Just going to put my books away.

Ted: And then you'll sit by yourself till supper time. (*Coming to him*) Why don't you stay around and play with us any more? (*Chayim does not answer*) I haven't done anything to hurt your feelings, have I? (*Chayim shakes his head miserably*) Maybe Lucy's been teasing you again —

Lucy (*who would slap him if Sadie didn't restrain her*): You mean thing—blaming me for everything.

Chayim (*brokenly*): No, you've been all so good to me, and I never mind what Lucy says. But— (*he breaks into sobbing and sits in the nearest chair, hiding his face*).

Lucy (*disdainfully*): Didn't I always say he was a regular cry-baby?

Ted (*threatening her*): You stop calling him names or—or I'll give you something to cry about yourself.

Chayim (*wiping his eyes*): Lucy's right—I'm silly—but I've been so lonesome lately.

Ted: I thought you were getting used to us and living in America.

Chayim: I am. But I've been getting lonelier and lonelier. I want to go back to Galicia.

Lucy: You must be crazy. Didn't you tell us the people were mean to you over there, and you didn't get enough to eat?

Chayim: But we had Succoth back home in Galicia!

Ted and Sadie: Succoth!

Chayim (*glad to teach these Americans something*): Maybe you don't know what Succoth is—in America. But I thought all Jews knew that much.

Lucy (*seated beside Sadie on sofa*): I do. It's a sort of Jewish holiday. (*To others*) Don't you remember, Grandma used to tell us stories about when she was a little girl in Europe, and they used to keep *all* the Jewish holidays?

Sadie (*apologetically*): We can't go to Sabbath School 'way out here in the country, and teacher isn't Jewish, so she can't teach us anything. What did you used to do on Succoth that you want it so bad?

Ted (*sitting down*): Did you have it every year?

Chayim (*proudly*): Every single year—till the war came and spoiled everything. I was just a little boy, but I remember all about it. We put up a *Succah*——

Sadie: What's that?

Lucy: Don't ask so many questions all the time or he'll think you don't know anything.

Chayim: A Succah is a sort of little house. Father told us when the Jews were in the wilderness they lived in 'em, and God told 'em to live in Succahs every year at harvest time to remember how He took them out of Egypt.

Ted: Harvest time? Then it's like our Thanksgiving in America.

Chayim: I don't know what you do on Thanksgiving in America——

Lucy: We just eat, and eat, and eat.

Chayim: We ate in our beautiful Succah for eight whole days—every meal. We made it out of boughs, and there was fruit hanging around the roof and a big hole made to see the stars through. (*Dreamily*) When we were driven out of our house by the soldiers and had to live in the woods, I used to think how pretty the stars looked shining into our Succah.

Lucy: I don't see what good the stars do anybody, that you want to look at 'em.

Chayim: Father said it ought to make us think of God, and that He would protect us—even in a little house like a Succah, that the wind could blow over almost.

Sadie: But I don't see why you get homesick for just a Succah—a little shanty like that.

Chayim (*earnestly*): It was beautiful—perfectly beautiful. It was fun to make it, and fun to eat in it, and fun to pray and sing after supper. I couldn't have one for three years 'count of the war, but mamma promised me I could this year. And now she's dead, and nobody else cares.

Sadie: Yes, we do.

Chayim (*with increasing excitement*): But you don't understand. I've been planning and planning and planning for that Succah ever since I came, and saw how nice it would be to build one right out in the grape arbor. I asked Uncle once, but he said he never bothered, so I was going to put one up myself and save something out of my supper every night and eat out there.

Ted: Why didn't you ask me about it?

Chayim: I was afraid you'd laugh; you always do when I say something that doesn't sound American.

Lucy: Well, why didn't you go and build your Succah instead of fussing about it and getting lonesome?

Chayim: Today's the first night of Succah—and look how it's snowing. I know Aunt would scold me if I went out in the snow again, 'cause she's always worrying about my cold. And besides, the snow would come down on the roof and spoil the looks of everything. (*Resignedly*) I guess I'll have to wait another year for my Succah.

Lucy (*springing up*): You won't, either. You won't have to wait for your Succah. (*Turning to others*) Aren't you ashamed when he's lonesome for his father and mother and his home, not to try to do something for him?

Chayim (*battling with his tears*): I miss them so much now, 'cause I keep remembering how we used to keep Succoth and ——(*breaks off*).

Ted (*accusingly*): You stop making him cry, Lucy, or I'll tell mamma.

Lucy: Go on and tell her. (*Taking Chayim's hand*) And we'll go and build a Succah.

Chayim (*hesitating*): Auntie won't let me stay out in the grape arbor on account of my cold.

Ted (*suddenly*): We don't need to go in the snow. I'll go out and get those hemlock boughs we put in the barn when we cut down the old tree near the gate.

Sadie: But where can we build our Succah?

Ted: Right here. I'll make a frame-work of those laths we've got left over from the chicken-house.

Lucy: We got plenty of apples down in the cellar to trim it with ——

Sadie: I didn't eat my orange father brought from town last week——(*runs and gets it from cupboard*)——here it is.

Lucy (*going to inner door*): I'll run down cellar and get the apples ——

Chayim (*putting on his coat*): I'll help you bring in the boughs ——

Sadie (*following Lucy*): Wait a minute——

(*The two girls pass through the inner door as the boys pass out of the outer. A moment later the door on right opens and Rosenberg enters.*)

Rosenberg (*calling, as he removes his coat*): Mary!

Mrs. Rosenberg (*appearing with Jack, now very clean, by the hand*): What is it?

Rosenberg: Why haven't the boys come out to help with the milking? Where are they?

Mrs. Rosenberg: They were in here just a minute ago. I heard them talking.

Rosenberg: I suppose Lucy put them up to some mischief again! (*Lucy and Sadie enter, their arms filled with apples, ears of corn and a huge pumpkin.*)

Mrs. Rosenberg: Girls! What are you doing?

Jack (*beginning his whine*): I want apples—I want corn.

Sadie: We're making Succoth.

Lucy (*with one of her explosive shouts*): Just the thing! (*She dashes out again through the inner door.*)

Rosenberg: You're always the good girl of the family, Sadie. What are you bringing all that stuff in here for?

Sadie (*very matter-of-fact*): We're just making Succoth.

(*Lucy comes running in, carrying a wreath of gay artificial flowers which she tears recklessly to pieces.*)

Jack (*grasping*): I want flowers.

Mrs. Rosenberg (*catching her hand*): Lucy! Isn't that the wreath from your best summer hat?

Lucy: Well, we haven't enough kinds of fruit to make the Succah look nice, so I thought I'd fix my flowers all over it. It's my hat, and I can spoil it if I want to.

Rosenberg: I didn't even remember it was Succoth. Who said we were going to have a Succah?

Sadie (*as there is a loud thumping at outer door*): There comes the Succah now! (*She runs to open the door, and admits Chayim and Ted almost crushed by the boughs and laths they carry.*)

Rosenberg (*almost speechless*): Well, did you ever?

Mrs. Rosenberg: You're going to make an awful muss ——

Chayim: I'm sorry. Maybe we better not have a Succah——

Lucy (*already trying to put up a stake*): Sadie and I will clean every bit of it up, won't we, Sadie? (*Aside to her mother*) Let him have it, mamma. He's a regular cry-baby, but he ought to have what he wants once in his life.

Rosenberg (*interested*): See here, Ted, you'll never get it to stand alone if you do it that way. (*Taking a pole*) Let me help. It isn't the first Succah I've made.

Chayim: I didn't know you ever made a Succah.

(*By this time they are all helping, except little Jack, who gets in everybody's way until he is mollified by receiving the pumpkin to play with.*)

Rosenberg: When I was your age I helped your grandfather and your father build one. But when I came to America and lived in a city I didn't have any place for one, and after I came on the farm I was just out of the habit of keeping the Jewish holidays, I guess.

Chayim: I should think Jewish farmers would want to have a Succah.

Sadie (*with happy inspiration*): Mamma, don't let's have any real supper tonight. Let's have a party, and eat in the Succah the way Chayim used to do.

Mrs. Rosenberg: That will be fine. Boys, help me move the table in the Succah.

(*It is all complete by this time, the slats covered with hemlock boughs and a roof of boughs. The children stand*

on chairs and drape Lucy's flowers and ears of corn from various angles, thrusting Sadie's orange and the apples wherever they will stick, and draping an American flag above the door.)

Lucy (after a battle with Jack, who doesn't want to relinquish his toy): We'll put the pumpkin in the corner—it'll look nice, even if we can't eat it. (*Chayim steals softly through the inner door; Ted helps his father carry the table into the Succah. Sadie and Lucy cover it with a white cloth and set it for the party. They bring plates of cake and fruit from cupboard, cut sandwiches, etc. Jack continually interferes and tries to help himself. Mrs. Rosenberg climbs upon a chair and brings an old-fashioned lamp down from the top shelf of cupboard. She dusts it and sets it on center of table.*)

Sadie: I never saw that before, mamma.

Mrs. Rosenberg: When we were little my mother used to have it in our Succah. It is very old; I think she got it from her grandmother.

(*The room has been growing gradually darker. She lights the lamp, which illuminates the entire Succah.*)

Ted: Wonder where Chayim went to?

Lucy: Suppose he went off to cry again.

Chayim (*entering Succah*): I'm never going to cry any more. I guess I was lonely for a lot of things—and thought it was just a Succah. I felt strange here, and didn't know how much you all liked me and wanted to please me. Now I know. (*He lays a little book beside Rosenberg's plate.*)

Rosenberg: What's that?

Chayim: My little Sidur—I used to say my prayers from it at home. I just went to my room and got it.

Ted (*opening book*): Can you read all that Hebrew?

Chayim: Of course—(*as they all sit about table*)—but I guess Uncle wants to read it tonight. Father always read the prayers in our Succah.

Rosenberg (*glancing over pages*): I'm ashamed of myself, Chayim, but I can't read Hebrew very easily any more. You read the prayers for us tonight.

Ted (*enviously*): You must know a lot.

Lucy: And I've been making fun of you 'cause you couldn't read English when you first came over here.

Chayim: If you help me read English better, I'll teach you how to read Hebrew.

Rosenberg: I wish you would. I know how bad Grandma would feel that you children aren't learning anything Jewish. Well, now let's start our thanksgiving service.

Sadie (*glancing around Succah*): It does look just like the platform at school did last Thanksgiving, doesn't it? (*To Chayim*) We always have a lovely program, and teacher asks each of us what we're thankful for. What are you going to say?

Chayim (*thoughtfully*): It wasn't safe all this time to build a Succah over there. But here everybody is good to me and Jews can keep their holidays—and have a Succah. (*His eyes seeking the little flag*) I think I'm going to be thankful for America! (*He opens his book and begins to read the traditional Succoth service as the curtain falls.*)

THE GOLDEN STAFF

A SUCCOTH OPERETTA

Text

ELMA EHRLICH LEVINGER

Music

SAMUEL GOLDFARB

NOTES TO THE PRODUCER

This little harvest play, with music, should not be presented unless there is a large enough group of children available to make an impressive chorus. For this reason it is especially suited to the needs of Sabbath Schools having a choral society.

The Psalms in the Second Act may be sung to some traditional melody or recited to appropriate music.

A child of seven or eight should be chosen for Joseph in Acts I and II. The Joseph of the last act should be an older boy, who need not possess an especially fine voice since he does no solo work. The music for Joseph's "Staff Song" is so simple that it can be mastered even by a very young child.

The costumes are the conventional flowing robe with the turban, veil and girdle to be seen in any oriental pictures.

The three scenes may be done against a simple dark background with an altar (a large box covered with white cloth) in the center of the stage for Act II.

CHARACTERS

NATHAN	<i>A Wealthy Landowner of Penuel</i>
MIRIAM	<i>His Wife</i>
JOSEPH	<i>Their Little Son</i> <i>(To be impersonated by a younger and older child)</i>
JOAB	<i>An Overseer</i>
SAMUEL	<i>A Worker from the Fields</i>
REUL	<i>A Shepherd</i>
DINAH, MARY	<i>Handmaids</i>
THE HIGH PRIEST.	
CALEB	<i>One of Nathan's Neighbors</i>
REUBEN, GAD	<i>Priests</i>
LITTLE ABNER	<i>A Servant</i> <i>Priests, Pilgrims, Nathan's Servants</i>

TIME—In the days of the Kings.

PLACE—In Penuel and Jerusalem.

The Golden Staff

ACT I

The scene shows an open place before the house of Nathan of Penuel, several days' journey from Jerusalem. Nathan and Joab stand talking together.

Nathan: And all the harvest has been gathered?

Joab: Ay, my master.

Nathan: And the workers in the vineyards and the shepherds from the hills are ready with their offering?

Joab: Ay, my master.

Nathan: Then hasten to call them together, for tonight we set out for Jerusalem to bring our harvest offerings to the House of the Lord.

(Jacob bows and exits R. Miriam comes from the house.)

Nathan: Wife, are your handmaidens in readiness to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem?

Miriam: Yes, my husband. Little Joseph is very impatient to set out. You remember that last year he was ill at Succoth, and before that time you thought him too young for the long journey?

Nathan: God be thanked that he was spared to us! Men have envied me my broad lands and many flocks, but I could part with all my treasures far more easily than my only son.

Miriam (*as Mary enters with the child*): Ah, my child, are you ready to start to Jerusalem with your father and me? (*Joseph runs to his father and examines his staff.*)

Mary: Dinah is laying out the festal robes you would have him wear.

Joseph: Mother, see the fine new staff father has. I'd like to have one too.

Miriam (*laughing*): You are too little. You will have to be carried as soon as you are tired. Why should you have a pilgrim staff?

Nathan: Nay, wife. I had intended to give our son a gift today, and it is nothing else but a staff. (*He enters house and returns carrying a small golden staff.*) See, Miriam, I have treasured it for our son all these years.

Miriam (*taking staff*): It is almost too precious to give to him while he is so young. (*Shows Joseph the staff.*) See, Joseph, the quaint symbols upon it, which show that you are of the tribe of Levi. It belonged to your grandfather, who was a mighty man in Israel. He gave it to your father when he was a tiny boy like you. Some day when you are older I will give you the staff.

Joseph: I want it now.

Miriam: You may lose it.

Nathan: Nay wife, let him have it. (*She shakes her head. Joseph leans against her knees and reaches for the staff.*)

THE SONG OF THE STAFF

(**Joseph sings**)

Oh, mother, give that staff to me,
That little staff of gold,
The pretty staff my father had
When he was just as old.

Nathan and Miriam (*laughing*)—

The pretty staff his father had
When he was just as old.

(*Miriam smilingly gives him the staff; he dances with joy.*)

Joseph—

Thanks, mother, for this little staff,
This pretty staff of gold!

(*Half doubtfully, as he looks up at his tall father, then down at staff*)—

Is this the staff my father had
When he was just so old?

(*Extends hand at level of his shoulder.*)

(*Dinah, carrying robes and cloaks over her arm, enters from house.*)

Joseph—

Oh, Dinah, see my pretty staff,
My little staff of gold;
This is the staff my father had
When he was four years old.

Nathan, Miriam and Dinah (*laughing*)—

This is the staff his father had
When he was four years old.

Dinah (*bending to look at it*): I have never seen such a beautiful staff before. (*Showing Miriam the robes*) Which of these garments shall he wear to the festival?

Miriam (*taking robes*): I will select one now. And do you, my maidens, call forth my other handmaids, that they may join us in our festal journey.

Nathan (*as Dinah and Mary go into the house*): Yes, wife, deck him like a prince, for I shall be prouder than a king when I show my son to the friends and kinsfolk I hope to meet in Jerusalem.

THE MOTHER'S SONG

(*Miriam sings*)

Oh, little son, the way is very long
To the fair city of the mighty king;
Yet countless pilgrims seek its gates with song,
Their bounteous gifts to the Lord to bring.
A long way off—a long way off—its holy towers shine,
Yet we shall see Jerusalem, O darling son of mine,
A long way off—a long way off—its holy towers shine,
Yet we shall see Jerusalem, O darling son of mine.

The harvesters pass singing down the road;
The treaders of the wine-press come with glee;
The shepherds laughing leave their flocks in fold,
All haste the Temple of the Lord to see.
A long way off—a long way off—its holy towers shine,
Yet we shall see Jerusalem, O darling son of mine,
A long way off—a long way off—its holy towers shine,
Yet we shall see Jerusalem, O darling son of mine.

Come, little one, here is thy robe, thy staff,
Come, let us hasten with the happy throng;
Twixt vines that in their purple vintage laugh
We'll pass, and raise our voice in grateful song.
A long way off—a long way off—its holy towers shine,
Yet we shall see Jerusalem, O darling son of mine,
A long way off—a long way off—its holy towers shine,
Yet we shall see Jerusalem, O darling son of mine.

(*Dinah, Mary, and a number of other handmaidens come from the house bearing fruit and willow branches.*)

Mary: See we have brought fruits from the tree and the vine.

Dinah: And we have plucked branches from the willows of the brook that we may carry them when we dance before the Lord.

Miriam (*rising*): You have done well, my daughters.

Nathan (*rising*): And here come the workers from the field and the vineyard ready for their journey into Jerusalem.
(*Enter Joab, followed by the harvesters, shepherds and workers of the vineyard.*)

Joab: All is in readiness for the journey, O master.

Samuel: See how my men have gathered their sheaves —

Reul: My shepherds shall drive before them the finest of the flocks, those without blemish, that we may offer them upon the altar of the Lord.

Dinah: Behold our grapes, purple and glowing —

Nathan: Ay, we shall bring worthy tithes to the House of the Lord, but let us not forget that no offering is half so fair in His eyes as a heart filled with gratitude and love. Let us raise our voices together as we journey towards Jerusalem, and sing songs of praise to the Lord who hath been gracious unto us, His people.

All—

God of Harvest, Thou whose hand
Doth sun and rain and dew provide,
Who crowneth all the year with good,
Receive our thanks this harvest-tide.
Laden with tithes of fruit and corn,
With offering from the field and tree,
We hasten to Jerusalem
And offer up our gifts to Thee.

Nathan—

O ruddy workers of the field,
Who toiled beneath the burning sun,
Now hasten with your golden sheaves,
The precious gift your labors won.

Harvesters (*led by Samuel*)—

Enriched with corn, the valleys sing,
They smile beneath the gracious sun;
The hills are clothed in endless joy;
With gladness all the rivers run.

All—

Laden with tithes of fruit and corn,
With offering from the field and tree,
We hasten to Jerusalem
And offer up our gifts to Thee,
We hasten to Jerusalem
And offer up our gifts to Thee.

Nathan—

Oh, maidens, come from where the vines
With purple wealth are running o'er,
Have ye brought offering rich enough,
When Israel's God ye come before?

Maidens (*led by Dinah*)—

The vines are rich with purple grapes,
Upon the ground the ripe fruits fall;
We gather them with thanks to Him
Who loveth and giveth all.

All—

Laden with tithes of fruit and corn,
With offering from the field and tree,
We hasten to Jersuallem
And offer up our gifts to Thee.

Nathan—

Oh, shepherds who have watched your flocks,
And led them by cool streams and deep,
Forget not Him who watcheth you,
A gentle Shepherd of His sheep!

Shepherds (*led by Reul*)—

Now clothed with flocks the pastures are,
With heads bent low they meekly stray;
For His poor sheep He doth provide,
And watcheth them from day to day.

All—

Laden with tithes of fruit and corn,
With offering from the field and tree,
We hasten to Jerusalem
And offer up our gifts to Thee,
We hasten to Jerusalem
And offer up our gifts to Thee.

Joab: See, master! Our neighbor Caleb and his household have already set out for Jerusalem.

Nathan: Then we can join them; see, they are coming hither.

Joseph (*from his mother's side*): I want to show neighbor Caleb my staff.

Miriam: Patience, little one. (*Enter Caleb, followed by members of his household, servants, etc., all with offerings.*)

Caleb: Lo, I and my household, my men servants and my maid servants, are ready to begin our journey to Jerusalem. Shall our households unite and take the road together?

Nathan: Surely. We shall go together in peace and with rejoicing.

All (*as they leave stage R.*)—

Laden with tithes of fruit and corn,
With offering from the field and tree,
We hasten to Jerusalem
And offer up our gifts to Thee,
We hasten to Jerusalem
And offer up our gifts to Thee.

(*The curtain is drawn as they pass out singing. Miriam, among her handmaidens, comes last. Little Joseph runs by her side proudly showing his staff to the various harvesters.*)

ACT II

Curtains are drawn to show High Priest at altar with his priests about him. Grouped on either side stand the Pilgrims with their offerings. They continue to sing and chant, the first few lines having been sung before the curtains are drawn.

With young children, it will be found advisable to curtail this "service" as much as possible, allowing them to recite the responses to appropriate music.

Pilgrims (*chanting*)—

The Lord hath visited the earth and hath caused it to
overflow with richness;

The Lord hath given His people of the bounty of
the harvest;

He hath filled our arms with the grain of the fields;

Our vineyards hath He also visited;

How shall we repay the Lord for His loving kindness?

How shall we give thanks for the abundance of His
mercy?

How shall we give thanks for the abundance of His
mercy?

Priest (*chanting*)—

Since the Lord hath visited the earth and hath caused
it to overflow with richness,

Since the Lord of Israel hath given His people of
the bounty of the harvest,

Let His people lay their golden sheaves before Him,

Let them bring Him the fruit of all their vineyards.

Thus shall ye repay the Lord for His loving kindness,
Thus shall ye give thanks for the abundance of His
mercy!

Thus shall ye give thanks for the abundance of His
mercy.

Pilgrims (*chanting as they pass High Priest and lay their offerings upon the altar*)—

Let us lay our tithes before the God of Israel;
Let us give the Lord of the bounty of our harvest;
Let us give Him of the best from the field and from
the vineyard;
Let us give the Lord of the bounty of our harvest.

Priest (*as they pause before him*)—

Lord God of Israel, reject not the offering of Thy people,
Be gracious unto us who bring our gifts before Thee!

Other Pilgrims (*chanting as they lay their offerings on altar while all sing*)—

Let us lay our tithes before the God of Israel;
Let us give the Lord of the bounty of our harvest;
Let us give Him of the best from the field and from the
vineyard;
Let us give the Lord of the bounty of our harvest.

Priest (*as they pause before him*)—

Lord God of Israel, reject not the offering of Thy people,
Be gracious unto all who bring their gifts before Thee!

Pilgrims (*as the harvest service is concluded*)—

We have given to the Lord who hath blessed us with the
abundance of His harvest;
We have given to the Lord who hath been gracious unto
His people.

(*A solemn pause. Then a group of young girls carrying willow branches come from the midst of the pilgrims and dance before the altar.*)

Maidens (*as the dance ends and they stand before the altar*)—

We have danced before the Lord with the branches of
the willow,

With the willows of the brook, before the God of Israel!

Pilgrims (*facing altar*)—

We have given to the Lord who hath blessed us with the
abundance of His harvest;

We have given to the Lord who hath been gracious unto
us His people.

Give us now thy blessing that we may depart in peace,

Let us go out in peace and know that the Lord is with us.

Priest (*raising his hands in blessing*)—

The Lord bless thee,

And keep thee;

The Lord make His face to shine upon thee,

And be gracious unto thee;

The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee,

And give thee peace!

Pilgrims (*chanting*)—

God be merciful unto us, and bless us,

And cause His face to shine upon us;

That His way may be known upon the earth,

And His loving kindness among all the nations.

Priest (*raising his hands*)—

The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee,

And give thee peace!

Pilgrims (*departing slowly*)—

The earth hath yielded her increase;

God, even our own God, shall bless us;

God shall bless us,

And all the earth shall fear Him.

Let all the peoples praise Thee, O Lord,

Let all the peoples praise Thee.

(The sound of chanting continues as they depart, and dies away in the distance.)

(No one remains upon the altar but the High Priest, who slowly descends and passes out R. Little Abner, a boy of seven, dressed in coarse garments, enters from L., looks about him, and suddenly picks up a bright silken scarf lying upon the floor. He is about to leave L. when he finds little Joseph sleeping in a corner behind the door, to which he has crept during the Harvest Service and where he now lies fast asleep. Abner shakes him gently.)

Joseph: Yes, father! *(he stretches sleepily)*.

Abner: Who is your father?

Joseph: He's just father.

Abner: That's silly—what's his name?

Joseph: Mother calls him 'husband', and the servants call him 'master'. *(Rising)* Where is father? I want him.

Abner: I don't know. How did you get here?

Joseph: I ran away while they were singing. I wanted to tease mother and hide here and jump out at her when she passed. But she's gone, and it's late, and I'm hungry, and I want to have my supper and go to bed. *(Begins to cry.)*

Abner: Stop crying—only girls cry.

Joseph: But I'm sleepy—and hungry ——

Abner: My mother is bondservant to a wealthy widow of Jerusalem. Our mistress loves children dearly, although she has none of her own. Come home with me and she will be good to you.

Joseph: Will she give me a good supper?

Abner: Yes, but let us hurry, for she sent me back to find her scarf she lost while in the temple. Come with me. And let me carry that little golden staff for you.

Joseph: No—it's mine!

(The two children go out together. A long silence. Then the sound of the Pilgrims singing in the distance is heard. Miriam and Nathan enter hastily from L. They look about them anxiously; Nathan shakes his head with a gesture of despair. Miriam sinks upon the altar steps weeping; he seeks to comfort her. From the distance comes the Pilgrims' song as they depart.)

Pilgrims—

The earth hath yielded her increase;
God, even our own God, shall bless us;
God shall bless us,
And all the earth shall fear Him.
Let the peoples praise Thee, O God,
Let all the peoples praise Thee.

ACT III

An outer court of the temple, during the festival of Succoth, ten years later. Pilgrims pass to and fro, among them two priests, Reuben and Gad, who enter from the R. and L. and meet and embrace.

Reuben: Have you heard—I am to serve before the altar with you during the harvest festal rites?

Gad: I am glad, my good Reuben. And Joseph—have you heard whether he has been appointed to serve with us?

Reuben: Ay, Joseph has also been elected to assist the high priest. And he is so much younger than the rest of us—he is only a novice.

Gad: But the favorite of the High Priest!

Reuben: And the favorite of all who know him. What a pity his foster-mother did not live to see him enter the priesthood!

Gad: Methinks he has never been the same since her death several months ago.

Reuben: Hush, here comes Joseph. (*Enter Joseph, a boy of fourteen, dressed as a priest. His golden staff is fastened in his girdle.*)

Gad: We were just rejoicing that you were called upon to serve with us this day.

Joseph (sadly): I thank you, my good friends. Once this would have brought me happiness, but today —

Reuben: We are indeed your friends. Tell us, Joseph, why you have seemed so heavy of heart these last few months.

Joseph (*as they seat themselves*): You know that I have always considered myself an orphan, but believed I was near of kin to the dear woman who reared me as her son. (*They nod.*) But just before her death several months ago she told me that I had been found here in the Temple by one of her young servants. She sent the servant away, and no one knew that she had no right to keep me in her household. But she was childless, and grew to love me and could not bear to give me up. She believed that I was the child of pilgrims who had come to Jerusalem for the festival; it was Succoth when her servant found me here in the Temple.

Gad: And she never told you until her death?

Joseph: No. Before she died she gave me this little golden staff which I have always carried at my girdle from that day. (*He takes it from his girdle and they examine it.*) It bears the symbol of the family of Levi; for this reason my foster-mother, who was of the family of priests, dedicated me to the Temple service. But it tells nothing of my father nor my mother—if I only knew whether they were alive or dead.

Gad (*rising*): Be of good courage! Who knows but that you may some day meet them again?

Reuben (*rising*): Come, brother Joseph, they wait us within, for soon it will be time to receive the pilgrims who have come to Jerusalem with their offerings for the Lord God of Israel.

Joseph (*without looking up*): Presently. But now I would be alone. (*They go out R.; Joseph sits looking sadly at his staff.*) And I cannot find them—(*he slips it beneath his robe*)—I cannot find my mother—my father—only my little staff to remind me of my childish days—and it cannot speak to me. (*As he sits lost in thought, Nathan and Miriam, both looking considerably older and care-worn, enter from L.*)

Nathan (*pausing before Joseph*): May my wife rest here in the cool courts before she goes within for the Temple service?

Joseph (*rising*): Rest here, and I will bring you water to drink, for you seem warm and tired.

Miriam: Nay, I will be better presently—'twas only the hot sun and the long journey.

Joseph: You have come far?

Nathan: From Penuel—with my men servants and my maid servants who wait without. (*Sighing*) Ah, wife, once the way did not seem long—that day long ago when our little son laughed and chattered as he danced beside us.

Joseph (*as Miriam weeps*): Your son is dead?

Nathan: We will speak no more of him.

Miriam: Ah, no, I cannot—I will not believe that my son is dead. It hardly seems a day since I sat before our house and sang to him as I dressed him for his journey to Jerusalem. (*Half unconsciously she begins to sing her song of the first act, "O little son, the way is very long," etc.*)

Joseph (*starting*): What song is that?

Miriam: Only a simple song my mother used to sing to my brothers before they set out on the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. And I sang it to my little boy;—listen: (*She sings the second stanza.*)

Joseph (*dreamily*): Surely I have never heard that song—and yet—a garden—a kind woman caressing me——

Miriam (*turning to Nathan with a startled cry*): Nathan! Did you hear——

Nathan (*hoarsely*): Go on singing—he is just the age—go on singing—perhaps he will remember.

Miriam (*singing*): "Come, little son, here is thy robe, thy staff——"

Joseph: My staff! A woman singing in the sunshine—and she gave me a staff—now I remember—see, see —— (*He tears open his robe and draws out the little golden staff.*)

Miriam (*embracing him as he kneels before her*): My little boy—my little boy.

Nathan: The staff my father had—the staff I gave my son! (*Embracing him.*) Praised be the God of Israel who hath reunited us after these many years. (*He hurries to the door L.*) Come, my servants, my men and my maids. (*The people of Nathan's household enter L.*) Come and bring your offerings, and thank God for the bounties of the harvest. And today thank Him with me that He hath restored my only son to me.

Joab: Can this be Joseph? (*Kissing his hands.*) O my young master, my heart is well-nigh bursting with joy that we have found you again. (*The servants of Nathan crowd about Joseph and kiss his hands and garments.*)

Miriam (*her arms about him*): But you are wearing the dress of a priest ——

Joseph: Yes, mother, I have been given to God, and I serve in His Temple.

Miriam: O my son, my son, have I found you only to lose you again?

Nathan: Nay, Miriam. Now he is ours in truth, and we can give him to God gladly. Today I bring the best of my harvest to lay before the God of Israel. My heart rejoices that I can also give my only son to His service. (*He turns to his people.*) Let us go in before the Lord and praise Him for His goodness.

(*Joseph, walking before his parents, leads them R. into the Temple. They sing the harvest song, "God of Harvest", as they pass. The song continues until the curtains are drawn.*)

The Golden Staff

A Succoth Operetta

Libretto by
E. C. Ehrlich

Music by
S. E. Goldfarb

The Staff Song

JOSEPH SINGS

(Voice) Oh,

Introduction. Sing slowly

f

moth-er, give that staff to me, That lit - tle staff of gold, The

pret - ty staff my fa - ther had when he was just as old,



The Staff Song

ff NATHAN AND MIRIAM *D. S.*

The pret - ty staff his fa - ther had when he was just as old.

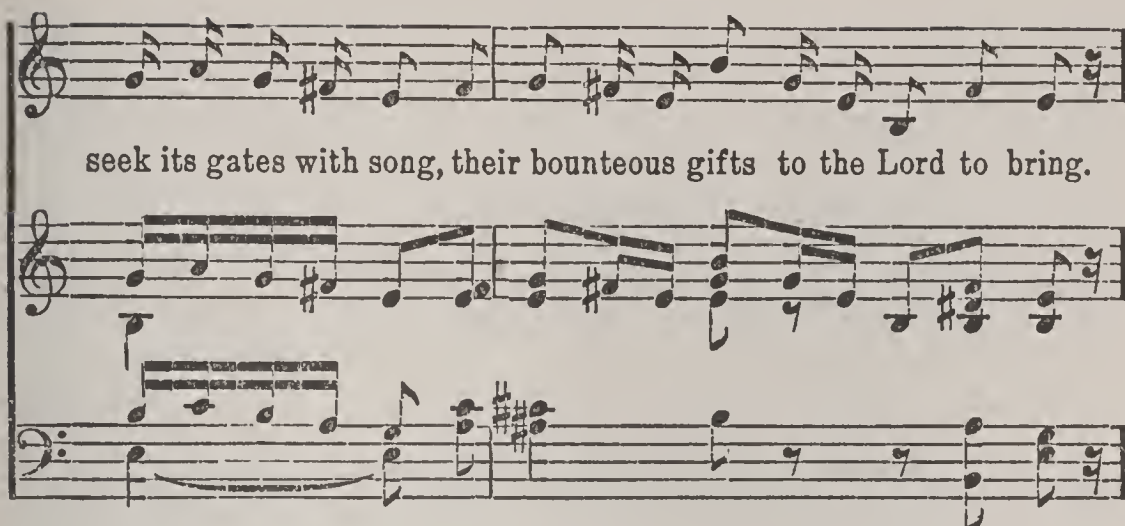
The Mother's Song

MIRIAM SINGS
Slowly, with expression

Oh, lit - tle son, the way is ver - y long to the

fair cit - y of the might-y king; Yet countless pil-grims

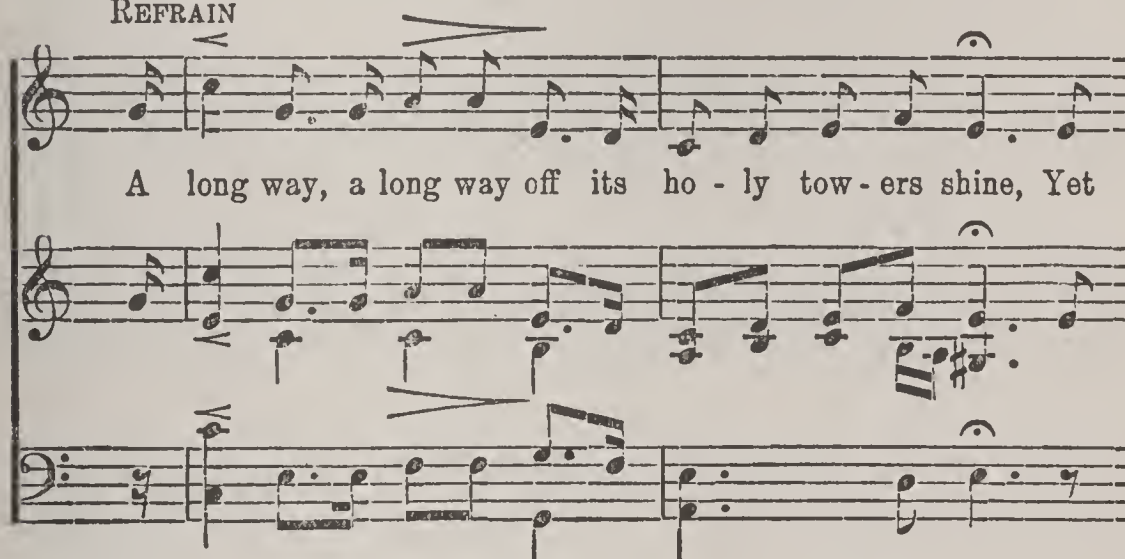
The Mother's Song



seek its gates with song, their bounteous gifts to the Lord to bring.

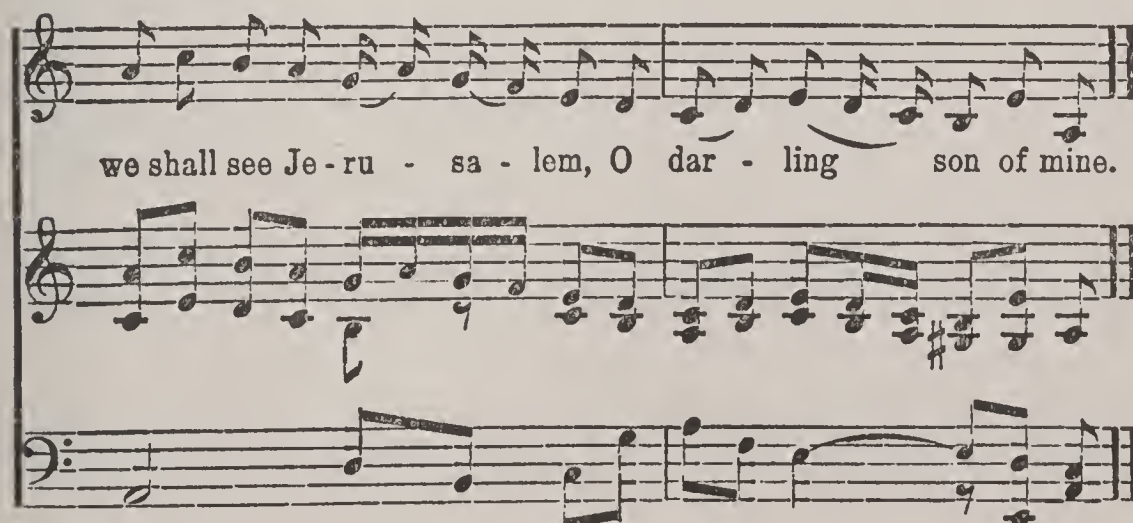
The first system of music consists of a single treble staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The melody is written in a simple, flowing style with eighth and sixteenth notes.

REFRAIN



A long way, a long way off its ho - ly tow - ers shine, Yet

The second system of music is the beginning of the refrain. It features a treble staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The melody is written in a simple, flowing style with eighth and sixteenth notes. There are dynamic markings (accents) above the first and third measures.



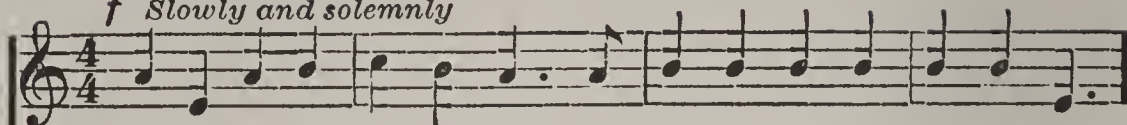
we shall see Je - ru - sa - lem, O dar - ling son of mine.

The third system of music continues the refrain. It features a treble staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The melody is written in a simple, flowing style with eighth and sixteenth notes. There are dynamic markings (accents) above the first and third measures.

The Harvest Song

ALL SING

f *Slowly and solemnly*



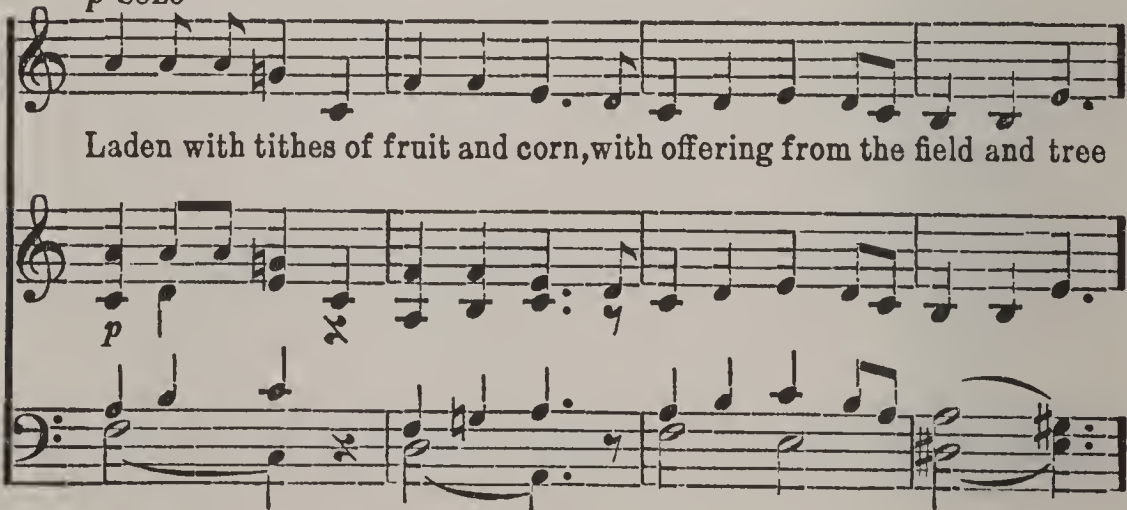
God of harvest, Thou whose hand doth sun and rain and dew pro-vide,



Who crowneth all the year with good, receive our thanks this har-vest-tide.



p SOLO



Laden with tithes of fruit and corn, with offering from the field and tree

The Harvest Song

First system of musical notation for 'The Harvest Song'. It consists of a treble and bass staff. The melody is in the treble staff, and the bass staff provides accompaniment. The lyrics 'We hasten to Je - ru - sa - lem, and of - fer up our gifts to Thee;' are written below the treble staff.

ff ALL SING *rit.*

Second system of musical notation for 'The Harvest Song'. It continues the melody and accompaniment from the first system. The lyrics 'We has-ten to Je - ru - sa - lem, and of - fer up our gifts to Thee.' are written below the treble staff. The system ends with a double bar line.

Chant Music

(While Priests and Pilgrims chant)

To be played slowly and solemnly

First system of musical notation for 'Chant Music'. It consists of a treble and bass staff. The melody is in the treble staff, and the bass staff provides accompaniment. The tempo/mood is indicated as 'pp' (pianissimo). The system ends with a double bar line.

D. C. al Fine

Second system of musical notation for 'Chant Music'. It continues the melody and accompaniment from the first system. The system ends with a double bar line.

THE UNLIGHTED MENORAH

A CHANUKAH FANTASY
OF THE TIME OF FELIX MENDELSSOHN

In One Act

NOTES TO THE PRODUCER

The actors should be chosen with the greatest care, especially those taking the part of Abraham, which requires considerable emotional power and excellent pantomime, and the role of Moses Mendelssohn, which requires a deep, full voice and an impressive bearing. Leah should be pretty and sympathetic; Felix, lively and active. The director should take special pains that Felix, although played in a lighter vein than the other characters, should never appear flippant.

If the actors representing Felix and Leah are proficient musicians, the piano may be placed either below the platform or at one of the exits, in full view of the audience, adding much to the effectiveness of the stage picture.

The costumes will be suggested by any good illustrated history or biography of the period. Leah and Felix should wear bright colors, Moses Mendelssohn a black suit with talith and cap, Abraham a dark lounging robe, a brighter robe thrown across his knees.

CHARACTERS

ABRAHAM MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY.

FELIX*His Oldest Son*

LEAH (Abraham's Wife), known as *Felicia*.

MOSES MENDELSSOHN*Abraham's Father*
(*Seen in his dream*)

TIME—A November evening in the year 1835, a few days before Abraham's death.

PLACE—The library of Abraham Mendelssohn's home, the Gartenhaus, in Berlin.

The Unlighted Menorah

Before the curtain rises, one hears the sound of a piano played softly behind the scenes. One of Mendelssohn's compositions written before 1835 should be used. Op. 15—his fantasie on the "Last Rose of Summer", one of the fantasies of the Op. 16, or one of his earlier "Lieder ohne Worte" would be appropriate. The music continues during the opening scene between Abraham and Leah.

The library of the Mendelssohn home is comfortable and tastefully arranged; the walls are lined with books. The room is lighted by candles in handsome and fantastic holders.

Abraham Mendelssohn, a man of fifty-nine, blind and frail, sits in a large arm-chair. At his elbow a table covered with books, several loose sheets of music, etc.; a picture in a silver frame; a vase of flowers; a lighted candle on the other side of the table, where a smaller arm-chair stands. Leah, a handsome woman, a few years his junior, stands before the bookcase in the back wall, apparently in search of a volume.

Leah: I'm sure I put back the volume of Lessing I was reading to you yesterday, Abraham.

Abraham: Do not trouble to look for it, dear. It is so pleasant just to sit here and listen to Felix playing his own songs.

Leah (*still searching*): But I know I put Lessing on the third shelf!

Abraham: Ah, Lessing—the defender of the Jew, the friend of Moses Mendelssohn. (*With a whimsical little laugh.*) I used to be proud of being the son of Moses Mendels-

sohn; now I am honored as the father of my son, Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. (*A moment of painful reverie.*) How proud father would have been of Felix—eh, Felicia?

Leah: But isn't it due to your planning and foresight that Felix has been appointed Kapellmeister at Leipzig?

Abraham: I tried to make the way easy for him. Yes, Felicia, it was better that we turned Christian. Felix has never known the hardship of being a Jew, even a Jew with wealth and family and education. When I think of what my poor father suffered——(*again drifts into reverie.*)

Leah: Perhaps the book has fallen back behind the others. (*Thrusts her hand behind the other volumes.*) There is something else here. (*She pulls out an old-fashioned Menorah.*) The old Menorah Tante Jette told me your father had in the old house at Hamburg!

Abraham: Let me see it (*reaches out his hands*). I mean let me feel it. (*She places it in his hands and sits across from him in the other arm-chair after laying her book upon the table.*) The old Chanukah Menorah! I remember how father used to say the blessing over the lights—and we would sing—what was that old Hebrew song?—ah, Mooz T'Zoor. (*Wistfully*) I should like to hear Felix play it, but he knows no Jewish songs.

Leah: But I remember it! (*She hums it softly.*)

Abraham (*feebly beating time*): I can almost see the Chanukah lights again! Ask Felix to play it for me, dear.

Leah (*rising and going to the door of the music room*): Felix, father wants you.

Felix (*entering*): Yes, father. (*He is young; handsomely dressed.*)

(*Leah sits near table going over books.*)

Abraham: Just now as you were playing, Felix, I wanted to hear an old Jewish song my father used to love. I would like to have you play it for me, for sometimes I am hungry to hear those old melodies again.

Felix: But I don't know anything about Jewish music, father. (*Picking up the Menorah from his father's lap.*) What a beautiful candlestick.

Abraham (*a trifle sadly*): You have never seen it lighted, Felix. At my father's house we lighted it each year on Chanukah, the Jewish Feast of Lights. If my father had lived you might have gone to his house with me at Chanukah, Felix, and heard him bless the candles. (*To Leah*): Perhaps if he had lived we might have remained Jews, Felicia.

Felix (*still holding the Menorah, sits on edge of table*): It seems strange to think of you as a Jew, father. (*Laughing*) Why, when I have finished my cantata of "St. Paul" it will be played in all the great churches of Europe. I can't imagine myself writing Jewish music, can you, father?

Abraham (*heavily*): No, Felix.

Leah (*hastily*): Father wants you to play an old Chanukah hymn. (*Rising*) I'll see whether I can play it myself first—and if I can, you must listen, Felix, and play it afterwards to father, for I know he prefers your music to mine.

Abraham (*with laughing protest*): Now, Felicia, you know better than that.

Leah (*standing behind his chair and smoothing back his hair*): And perhaps the music will drive away the foolish dreams that have been troubling you since your illness.

Abraham (*feeling for her hand and holding it against his cheek*): I am not so ill as you would have me, Leah.

Leah (*a little wistfully*): My old Jewish name!

Abraham: The foolish dreams which come to me in my darkness bring back old memories, Felicia.

(*She seems about to speak, then with a caress full of tender understanding she leaves him and walks quietly toward the music room. Felix is about to follow her, then pauses irresolutely at the table, where he stands fingering the Menorah.*)

Felix: A Jewish Chanukah lamp! And I often forget that grandfather was a Jew. (*Picking up the picture.*) Yet I always liked this picture. He did a great deal for your—for *his* people, didn't he, father?

Abraham: He was a prince among Jews and a Jew among princes, (*bitterly*) for he was never ashamed of his faith. I wish I might have loved my religion as he did!

Felix (*curiously*): I never knew you felt like that, father.

Abraham: Perhaps it is because, having grown blind, I am learning to see clearly what I never saw before. It might have been harder for all of us had we remained Jews, and yet—— (*Hastily*) Do not speak of this to mother, Felix; I would not have her unhappy.

Felix (*thoughtfully, as he absently fingers the Menorah*): If things had been different—if my grandfather had remained poor and unknown—and you and I would have been born in some miserable ghetto—would I have written chants for the synagogue and songs for the festivals, instead of music like my “St. Paul” for the Christian Church?

Leah (*at door*): I want you to come and listen while I play the Chanukah hymn, Felix.

Felix (*still dreamily*): I'm coming. (*He puts the Menorah on the table and walks thoughtfully toward the music room. At the door he turns to his father and adds*):

Had I been reared a Jew it would have made a great difference in my music, father.

(Abraham is left alone, his head bowed on his breast. The candles in the room have burned lower; the light is very dim. From the next room comes the music of "Mooz T'Zoor", which continues during the scene—first played falteringly, as though Leah were trying to remember the old strain, then with more assurance, and finally louder and stronger as Felix plays.)

Abraham *(with a great sob of yearning in his voice)*: He says Judaism would have made a difference in his music. What a difference it would have made in my life!

(As he sits brooding, a man enters. He is middle-aged, wears a skull-cap and talith. As he crosses to the table he sees the Menorah upon it; he picks it up gently, a smile brightening his ugly face.)

Mendelssohn: You have the old Menorah? You still light the Chanukah candles, my son?

Abraham *(stretching out his hands to him)*: Father!

Mendelssohn *(without approaching him)*: I am glad. *(The strain of Mooz T'Zoor grows stronger.)* And the old Chanukah hymn! It is good to be a Jew and love the beautiful old customs of our fathers.

Abraham: But it is not always easy to be a Jew, father! *(Ashamed)* It was not easy for me, so —— *(stops, confused.)*

Mendelssohn *(quietly)*: It is never easy to be a Jew, my son. For me it meant hunger and poverty and hatred—yes, bitter hatred and injustice, even after the hunger and the poverty had passed away. *(Sits by the table, across from Abraham.)* Yet it is a great joy to be a Jew. I know I was happy through all my miseries, for I loved my people, and I was sure I would be permitted to help carry on the light.

Abraham: Carry on the light?

Mendelssohn: Every Jew is a torch-bearer. We are like runners in the old Greek races. (*Picks up lighted candle from table.*) Each runner bears a torch, which he thrusts into the hand of the man who follows him when he drops out of the race. My father gave me the love of learning and a Jewish mind; I hope I passed on these treasures to my children. What will you give your son for his birthright, Abraham? (*Puts down candle-stick.*)

Abraham (*turning away*): Oh, father—father ——

Mendelssohn (*as though misunderstanding the cause of his grief*): Is he not a worthy son?

Abraham: Yes—but he is not a Jew ——

Mendelssohn: I am sorry for the great grief that has come to you, my child. It is hard for you that he will not carry the light down through the ages—that he will never kindle the candles in this old Menorah and say the Chanukah blessing over them.

Abraham: But it is I who have sinned—I ——

Mendelssohn: I know how you would shield him, Abraham. So would I have defended your brothers and you against blame; but my children were always faithful and obedient. (*Rising and approaching a little nearer.*) Do you remember our home, your dear mother, who did not laugh at me when I dared to raise my eyes to her beauty, your sisters, your brothers—how all of you gathered about the table that last Chanukah before—I went away?

Abraham (*dreamily*): Yes, father—I sometimes see it now—as I see you—although my eyes are dark—as one sees things in a dream. We are sitting about the table—I am leaning upon mother's knee—and you—you are

lighting the first of the Chanukah candles. Because I am the youngest and have been ill, you let me say the blessing over the first candle. (*Whimsically*) I wish I might say it now ——

Mendelssohn (*in loving pity*): You may light the candles—and say the blessing, my son. (*Abraham gropes for the lighted candle on the other side of the table.*)

Abraham (*eagerly*): Give me the candle—the lighted candle, father. It is called the “Shammas”, isn’t it? Give me the candle, father.

Mendelssohn (*placing lighted candle in his hand*): I have given you the lighted candle, my child.

Abraham: Yes (*joyfully*), I feel the heat of the flame upon my eyelids. (*Groping with his free hand*) But I want the Menorah. (*He touches the Menorah and draws it to him.*) Now I will light it. (*As his hand wanders over the Menorah a look of grieved surprise flits across his face.*) Father, I do not think there is any candle here—I cannot find it. (*Faltering*) Boruch—boruch atto—(*Brokenly*) I remember the Hebrew of the blessing—but where is the candle?

Mendelssohn (*slowly*): My son, I gave you the light, but you have not been able to renew it; you cannot light your Menorah, for your son will never kindle the Chanukah candles in his own home, nor will his children after him. (*He takes the lighted candle and replaces it across the table. Abraham bows his head over the empty Menorah and sobs like a child.*)

Mendelssohn (*his hands lingering for a moment over Abraham’s bent head as though to bless him*): But if you still remain a good Jew, my son, the light of the Torah will always be a light to give you comfort in your darkness.

Abraham: Father!—I must tell you, oh, father!—— (*He gropes to catch Mendelssohn's hand; but Mendelssohn, shaking his head with a strange, wistful smile, passes out into the night. The music in the next room dies away, as Abraham, still half asleep, murmurs brokenly*): If I could only keep on dreaming—then I could see you father—for I am lonely and cold, and it is dark ——

(*Felix enters from the music room and hurries to his father.*)

Felix: Father, what is it—are you dreaming again?—father!

Abraham (*pitifully*): The Menorah—I cannot light it—it is empty.

Felix (*puzzled*): Of course it is empty, father. Why should you want to light it? (*Sits beside him and speaks enthusiastically.*) Do you know, father, that as I sat listening to mother's playing, I had the finest inspiration for a new motif in my cantata of "St. Paul". (*With a boyish laugh.*) Oh, you'll be proud of me when you hear it! Why, by next Christmas it will be played in all the churches in Europe! (*He breaks off to look curiously at his father, who sits with his head bowed over the Menorah, sobbing like a child.*)

Abraham: And the Menorah—will never—be lighted!

THE LIGHT OF ISRAEL

A CHANUKAH PLAY

In Four Acts

NOTES TO THE PRODUCER

Unless ample time is allowed for the preparation of this play it is best not to attempt it, as the leading characters need intensive training, and the "mob" requires long and arduous rehearsals. Minor characters, like Johanan and Simon, should be in the hands of reliable boys who can be trusted to give the cues to the "mob".

If the actors know the Hebrew of the responses given in the last act, so much the better. They should be sung to traditional melodies found in the Union Hymnal; the longer portions may be sung as a solo by one boy, designated as the "Priest", or divided among two or three of the actors.

The scenery may be very simple, consisting of dark draperies. In Act I, the entrance of the house may be suggested by screens; slightly changed, they form the "tent" of Act II, while the rocks are formed by arranging boxes in an irregular mass and covering with stone-colored cloth; in Act III, a low dais, a graceful chair of Greek design, near by a brass bowl filled with red roses, and, if possible, a lion or bear skin upon the floor; in Act IV, if possible to build steps, one exit may be used to represent the entrance to the Temple.

The "Altar" of Act I is a soap box covered with white cloth, carried on "runners". The armor, swords, etc., may be rented or made by the actors themselves. The lamps carried in Act IV should be of the type known as "den lamps" and lighted with candles. If there is any sentiment against using a real Sefer Torah, a scroll may be made of brown paper; it must not be too large for a young child to carry easily.

The costumes should be in various colors, short tunics (and after Act I armor) for the boys, long flowing robes with veils or ribbon headbands for the girls. Hannah should wear a plain dark robe, sleeveless, a dark cord about her waist. Antiochus, his soldiers, the child Ezra and (for Acts II and III) Glaucus should all wear scarlet and gold; Antiochus also wears a long mantle trimmed with gold and a diadem. Eleazar carries out the color scheme of the scene by wearing a white robe with a red girdle and cloak. He should wear a white wig or have his hair powdered. In Act I, Glaucus wears pale blue tunic and rich purple cloak; in Act IV, only the tunic. The garment of Mattathias should be made from burlap or other rough material to suggest sack-cloth; he wears a long white wig.

CHARACTERS

ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES*Tyrant over Israel*

MATTATHIAS (*of Modin*).

JOHANAN CADDIS	} <i>His Sons.</i>
SIMON THASSI		
JUDAS MACCABEUS		
ELEAZAR AVARAN		
JONATHAN APPHUS		

GLAUCUS*A Friend of Judas*

SALMON (*of Modin*).

ELEAZAR*An Old Man*

APPELLES*Syrian Envoy*

A PRIEST.

EZRA*Hannah's Youngest Son*

FIRST SYRIAN SOLDIER.

SECOND SYRIAN SOLDIER.

A LITTLE CHILD.

HANNAH.

LEAH.

PRIESTS, MEN AND WOMEN OF ISRAEL

The Light of Israel

PROLOGUE

*To be spoken by the little child of the play who carries
a scroll in his arms.*

Soldiers who have fought for this our Law,
Men of Peace who taught it to the young,
Worthy mothers who have reared true sons
To love the Law—to die for it—or live
And walk before our God as worthy men—
To you we give our thanks, our love, our praise.
Our fathers left this precious gift to us,
The Light of Israel—our young, foolish hands
Must keep it glowing through the coming years,
That other Jews, who follow us, may find
The Light of Israel shining on their path.

ACT I

The scene shows the exterior of the house of Mattathias at Modin. Mattathias, a venerable old man, sits upon a low seat at the center, clothed in sack-cloth. Two of his sons, Johanan and Simon Thassi, stand at the R. in watchful attitudes; Glaucus, richly dressed, enters L. and bows before Mattathias.

Glaucus Oh, good Mattathias, I but lately come
From Antioch, am amazed that in our streets
The citizens of Modin mourn—like thee.
Why dost thou dress in sack-cloth—bow thy
 head?

*(Mattathias does not answer. Glaucus turns
to Johanan who has approached him.)*

Johanan Thou comest from Antioch? Surely thou dost
 know
Antiochus, his heart raised high in pride
At conquering Egypt, has decreed the Jews
Must bow before his laws or suffer death.

Simon Our father sent our brethren abroad
That they may bring us tidings of the course
The Jews adopt. Meanwhile he fasts and
 prays.

Glaucus My Judas—is he with them?

Simon He hath gone
Unto Jerusalem to bring us news.

- Mattathias** (*Who has raised his head at mention of Jerusalem, speaks sadly*):
'Tis said Antiochus destroys the Law—
His soldiers rend and burn the sacred scroll,
And they who guard it suffer bitter death.
 (*Breaking down*)
The Law—the Light of Israel, groweth dim.
- Johanan** (*As Judas hurries in at R.*): 'Tis Judas!
- Judas** (*Throwing himself before Mattathias*)—
Father, it is as thou hast feared:
The city quakes beneath the tyrant's tread,
For he hath ravaged all Jerusalem,
And from the sanctuary hath he ta'en
The golden altar and the holy veil,
The censers and the crowns and ornaments;
The hidden treasure also hath he found.
- Mattathias** (*Covering his face*): Why was I born to see
 my people's woe,
The holy city in the grasp of foes?
 (*Judas rises and sees Glaucus. They embrace warmly.*)
- Glaucus** (*Slips a rich chain about Judas' neck*): My
 Judas! I have missed thee while away.
- Judas** And I, my friend, missed thee. (*Sharply*)
But thou hast come
As to a feast—ashes on Jewish heads
And sack-cloth are more fitting for our grief.
 (*Eleazar, followed by the men and women of Modin, runs in at L. He kneels before Mattathias.*)
- Eleazar** Father, I bring thee very bitter news;
Princes and elders mourn throughout the land;

Virgins and young men—those who sit within
The marriage chamber—all are bowed in grief
Before this plague that overwhelms our race.

(He rises.)

The People Woe, woe for Israel!

Mattathias Woe for Israel's Law!

Salmon *(From crowd):* Here cometh Jonathan, thy
youngest son.

People *(Entering with Jonathan, R.):* Tell us thy
news, thy news, O Jonathan!

Jonathan *(Forcing his way to his father and addressing
the people):*

We have no strongholds left. This Syrian
king

Both near and far hews down our mighty men;
Women and children doth he sell for slaves;
He takes our cattle.

People Woe for Israel!

Jonathan *(Holding up his hand for silence)—*

Antiochus commands that every Jew
Bring sacrifice unto the Grecian gods;
Those who obey our Law he cruelly slays—
Our holy places stains with martyrs' blood,
And scorns our Sabbaths, and our holy feasts
Turns into mourning.

People God save Israel!

Mattathias *(Brokenly):* Lord, let me die, for I have
lived too long.

*(There is murmuring among the people. Then
Glaucus, who has stood with his hand on*

Judas' shoulder, steps before them. He speaks lightly, almost mockingly.)

Glaucus Good friends of Modin, ye all know me well,
A Jew, a townsman.

People *(Interrupting):* What of Antioch?

Glaucus I grieve for Israel's woe, yet hark to me:
I have seen this Antiochus, your foe;
He is a mighty man; none can resist
His slightest word; obey and bow to him,
And he will make you happy, honored, rich—
(Points to his jewels, etc.)

Refuse him your obedience—*(shrugs his shoulders)*—ye have heard
The fate of those who cling to Israel's Law.

Judas *(Coming angrily to him):* O men of Modin,
ye have known this man
As my best friend, the brother of my youth;
And ye have heard him bid us fling away
The faith our fathers held. Thus do I throw
(Flings chain in his face)

His latest gift back in his coward's face,
And with it fling my early trust and love!

Glaucus *(Brokenly):* My Judas! *(He picks up the chain, turns, and is lost in the crowd.)*

Child *(From crowd):* Mother, see the man!
(From the R. enter Appelles in the red robes of the Syrian officer, several soldiers, two of them carrying a small altar with arrangements for burning incense.)

- Appelles** Be silent all.
*(Mattathias rises and stands leaning upon the
 shoulders of Johanan and Simon.)*
- Salmon** *(Cringing):* Be silent—'tis the envoy of the
 king.
- Appelles** *(As the men set up the altar in the center of
 the stage):* Antiochus, our mighty king,
 decrees
The Jews become as Greeks throughout his
 realm
And render homage to the Grecian gods.
Therefore, let every Jew make haste to show
His swift obedience to the king's command.
(Glances about) Where is Mattathias?
- Mattathias** Sir, I am he.
- Appelles** Thou art a ruler and an honored man,
And strengthened through thy brethren and
 thy sons;
Now, therefore, come thou first—obey the
 king,
And all thine house shall be as are his friends,
And he will gold and honor freely give
Unto thy children—sacrifice—and live!
- Mattathias** *(Beginning feebly, but growing in strength):*
Though all the nations under his control
Obey the king and leave their ancient faith,
Yet will I and my sons and brethren walk
In the same paths our honored fathers trod.

Our God forbid that we forsake the Law,
Nor to the right hand nor the left depart;
(*Stepping forward*)

We will not hearken to the king's command.

Appelles Thou and thy sons shall perish for thy words.
(*Looks about him*) But those who burn the
incense shall be saved. (*His glance falls
upon the trembling Salmon.*)

Come thou and save thy life.

Salmon (*Waveringly*): I am a Jew——

Appelles Thou art a Greek now—come!
(*Salmon approaches the altar. He puts out
his hand for the brazen lamp to light it,
but Mattathias seizes it and strikes him to
the earth.*)

Mattathias (*Staggering back and clinging to Judas*): So
perish every traitor to the Lord!
(*His sons crowd around him. The people cry
out and rush between them and the Syr-
ian soldiers.*)

Mattathias (*His old voice like a trumpet*): Those who
are on the Lord's side follow me!
(*The people snatch the spears from the Syr-
ians and surround him as the curtain
falls.*)

ACT II

Before the tent of Mattathias in the mountains of Ephraim; Jonathan stands before it, leaning on his spear; Eleazar stands upon some rocks at L., looking down into the valley.

Eleazar See those who climb the mountain paths below,
More refugees who seek for shelter here.

Jonathan Our camp grows to a city—others come;
How can our scarcity of stores suffice for all?

Johanan (*Coming from tent*): Our father has awak-
ened; he will speak
To those who gather here.

Jonathan He grows more weak—
His death would leave us as a flock of sheep
Without a shepherd.

Eleazar (*Coming down*): If he dies, this wolf
Antiochus will seize us by the throat.

Judas (*In armor entering from the tent*)—
Let every man and woman of the camp
Be summoned straight to hear our father's
voice.

Go bring them, Eleazar. Jonathan,
Blow on thy trumpet that the camp may hear.
(*Eleazar exits R. Jonathan climbs upon the
rocks and blows a blast on his trumpet.*)

Jonathan (*Coming down*): More women seeking safety
from our foes!

(*A company of women, travel-stained and
weary, enter from L. Leah, her child
clinging to her dress, advances to Judas.*)

- Leah Long have we traveled, lord, to find this
 place.
 Our homes are burned; our sons and husbands
 slain;
 And if thou wilt not save us we must die.
- Judas Small is our store of food and comfort here;
 Our army weak, untrained, unfit for war.
 Yet ye are welcome.
- Johanan Lo, the others come!
 (*Enter from L. those who have taken refuge
 in the camp. The men are dressed in
 makeshift armor and carry rude weapons.*)
- Simon (*Coming to door of tent, the scroll of the Law
 in his arms*): Mattathias will speak to us,
 his sons,
 And these, our brethren, who have followed
 him.
 (*Gives the scroll to Jonathan, re-enters tent,
 and comes forward with Mattathias, now
 grown very feeble, leaning upon him.
 Mattathias has a sword girded at his side.*)
- Mattathias The time hath come when I must go the way
 My father went. I die and leave my sons
 To fight the fight that I have ever fought.
 And ye, my people, give to them your hearts;
 Obey them gladly; place your trust in God,
 For in Him is our refuge and our strength.
 (*He leans wearily on Jonathan's shoulder.*)
- Jonathan Tell us, my father, who shall be our guide,
 To counsel us and lead us in the field?
- Mattathias Simon!
- Simon (*Kneels before him*): Father, I am here.

- Mattathias** A man of counsel hath he always been;
Give ear to him; he will your father be.
 (*Puts scroll in his arms*)
Guard thou the Law—the Light of Israel.
- Eleazar** (*As Simon arises*): But who will be our cap-
tain in the war?
- Mattathias** And where is Judas?
- Judas** (*Kneels before him*): Father, at thy feet.
- Mattathias** (*Ungirding his sword*): He hath been mighty
even from his youth;
Let him be captain, let him wage the war
To save our people, and restore our Law.
 (*Placing sword in his hands*)
Be thou a lion in the fight of God!
 (*As Judas rises*)
Will ye accept him captain of your host?
- Soldiers** (*Throwing down their cloaks before him in
token of loyalty*): He is our leader—we
will trust in him.
- Judas** (*Girding on the sword*): Nay, brethren, trust
in Him who leads our host!
- Mattathias** (*His hands raised in blessing as they bow be-
fore him*): Be valiant, O my sons, and
show yourselves
Men for the Law. My people, may our God
Bless you and keep you, cause His face to
shine
Upon you; may He grant you lasting peace.
(*All remain kneeling while Mattathias retires
into his tent. As they rise, Glaucus, in
the uniform of a Syrian officer, followed
by several Syrian soldiers, enters L.*)
- People** The traitor—slay the traitor—kill the spy!

Judas (*Raising his hand*): Peace—peace, I say.
(*To Glaucus*) What is thy message?
Speak!

Glaucus (*As people murmur amongst themselves*): I
come as envoy from your rightful king.

Judas (*As people interrupt with hisses*): He comes
as envoy—Silence! Let him speak!

Glaucus He sends me, for he knows I love right well
My Jewish brethren (*people murmur*)—wish
them every good.

I ask you as a friend—pray hark to me!
Why will ye strive against a mighty king?
He is strong as God—the Jews are weak
As little children; he hath men and gold
To last through many battles—ye are few,
Untrained, and have no weapons—no supplies:
Yet will ye war against Antiochus!

Judas (*Bitterly*): Thou sayest thou comest amongst
us as a friend—

I say the cruelest captain of thy king
Would be less hated than a dog like thee,
Who comest to mock us in thy Syrian dress,
His gifts upon thine arms and on thy neck;
Go—crawl back to thy master—tell him this:
We Jews be starving in our mountain camp,
Our men are few and ill-prepared for war;
But we fight for a King before whose might
The kings of earth are nothing. We will war
Until but one Jew stands to face his foe—

(*Draws his sword*)

And when he falls, his watchword still shall be
The watchword of his brethren: "Help of
God".

Soldiers (*Drawing their swords*): This be our only
watchword: "Help of God".

- Glaucus** I'll take your answer to my lord, the king.
(Turns to Judas slowly)
Perhaps we'll meet no more—then ere I go,
Bid me farewell—O Judas—take my hand!
(He approaches Judas with extended hands.)
- Judas** *(Turning away):* The man I loved is dead—
he died that day
He turned a traitor to his father's God.
*(Glaucus tries to laugh, fails, and passes out
L. with his soldiers, followed by the
hisses of the angry people.)*
- Judas** Be silent! When ye come upon the field,
God grant your anger burn as brightly then.
Now bid your wives and little ones farewell;
Seek out your parents for a last embrace;
If ye have friends—e'en as I had a friend—
*(His voice breaks, and he continues with
difficulty)*
First clasp their hands in parting ere we go.
Then each man to his tent! Till trumpet
sounds;
Bow low in prayer before the Lord of Hosts,
Who will deliver us with His strong hand.
(Takes Law from Simon)
And this, our Law, shall be before us borne,
Our flag, the Jewel we fight for, the true light
To shine upon our hearts and give us hope
That God still thinks on us and shields our
heads.
- People** He is our God and we will trust in Him.
*(The people pass quietly out R. Judas motions his brothers to retire into the tent.
He gives the Law back to Simon.)*

Judas Now leave me, for I too would speak to God.
 (*Simon enters the tent. Judas takes off his
 helmet and throws down his spear and
 sword. He sits upon rocks, and speaks
 simply, almost timidly, as a little child
 might speak.*)

Judas O Lord, Lord God, Creator of all things,
 Most merciful and strong and just and right,
 The One, the gracious King who giveth all,
 O Thou Almighty and Eternal One,
 Thou that deliverest Israel from all woe,
 And made our fathers holy in Thy sight:
 Deliver them that would the heathen serve—
 Yea, even him, my friend, the man I love—
 Gather together those now scattered far;
 Plant us, Thy people, in Thy holy place,
 And let the heathen know that Thou art God!

ACT III

A room in the palace of Antiochus at Antioch. It is splendidly furnished; a chair of Greek pattern stands on a raised dais in the back of the room. At the foot of the dais is spread a lion's skin on which little Ezra, a beautiful boy, dressed in rich Syrian garments, lies asleep. His scarlet scarf has fallen off and lies on the rug at his side. Antiochus, clothed in a scarlet robe with many jewels, enters R. talking to Glaucus, who still wears Syrian uniform.

Antiochus These Jewish curs shall yelp beneath my heel;
Soon will they crave to eat the flesh of swine
In their mad hunger! (*Sees child*) Ah, 'tis he,
The youngest son of Hannah—her one child.

Glaucus Nay, king, but Hannah mothered seven sons.

Antiochus (*Seats himself on dais*): While thou didst
 seek out Judas, they were brought
Before me with their mother. My command
To eat of swine's flesh mocking disobeyed;
They were all slain with tortures terrible,
Save him, the youngest. He's too fair a flower
To wither in my dungeons—he's too young
To slay. (*Laughs*) By Bacchus, I grow kind!
I sent for him; will treat him as my son,
And shower gifts upon him, as on thee,
If he will but obey me, serve my gods,
And mock the Law for which his brethren
 died. .

Glaucus And Hannah—his poor mother—where is she?

Antiochus She lies in prison. I will send for her
To plead with Ezra. Her torn heart is sore
At slaying of the others. She will yield
And bid the boy yield also. Wake him now.

- Glaucus (*Bending over boy*): Ezra, awake!
- Ezra (*Sleepily*): My mother, where art thou?
- Glaucus The king would speak with thee.
- Ezra (*Rising*): Why am I here?
Last night I slept within a dungeon dark;
I wore mean robes, now I am dressed in these;
Thy servants mocked at me, and called me a
 prince.
- Antiochus Thou hast been brought here since I love thee
 well,
And fain would save thee from the awful
 death
Thy brothers tasted. Come, child, do not
 weep,
For unto thee I will be merciful.
- Ezra (*Controlling himself with an effort*): And
 she, my mother, is she also dead?
- Antiochus Nay, thou wilt see her shortly.
- Glaucus (*Who has gone to R. door, returns*)—
Gracious king,
My men have come here with a worthy Jew;
This old man, gray and honored, they would
 drag
Straightway to torture. For thy love of me,
Pray bid them bring him here, before thy
 face,
That thou may'st judge and save his age from
 shame.
- Antiochus Lead him before me. (*Two soldiers bring in
 Eleazar, a very old man leaning on a
 staff.*)
What is his offense?

- First Soldier** Great king, this wretched man doth boldly
laugh
At thy commandments; hold thy word to
scorn;
He will not eat of swine's flesh; here he stands
Brought to the torture as thou didst com-
mand.
- Glaucus** Oh, save him, king! He is an aged man;
Let not cruel torments vex a man so old;
Spare his gray head and let him die in peace.
- Antiochus** I, of my love for thee, will spare his life.
(*To Eleazar*) But one thing I demand ere
thou depart:
Thou wilt be spared if, in the market place,
Thou wilt eat food that thou dost thyself pro-
vide;
My officers will say the flesh is swine,
And many, seeing thee, will straightway eat
As I command them. Wilt thou do this
thing?
- Eleazar** (*Quietly*): It ill becomes mine age, Anti-
ochus,
To teach the young to disobey God's Law.
- Antiochus** If thou dost not obey me, thou wilt die.
- Eleazar** I will not take this stain upon my soul;
Rather I choose to die to prove my faith,
And show myself such as mine age requires.
(*His hand on Ezra's head, who has crept to
him*)
Now let the young die willingly as I.
- Antiochus** (*Rising angrily*): Slay him, and show no
mercy in his death! (*Two soldiers lead
him away L.*)

- Eleazar** Yea, I am well content to suffer pain
Because I love the Lord for whom I die.
- Glaucus** Antiochus, friend, spare him for my sake.
- Antiochus** (*Sitting*): Let his God save him since he
 trusts in Him.
 (*Soldiers enter L. leading Hannah, a frail,
 sorrowful woman, clad in dark robes.*)
- Second Soldier** This is the woman Hannah.
- Ezra** (*Running to her*): Mother dear!
- Hannah** (*Holding him to her*): My one, my only one—
 oh, cling to me!
Thee have they spared me from among my
 boys—
My Ezra—my heart's flower—little son.
 (*She holds him in her arms and murmurs lov-
 ingly over him, while Glaucus turns away.*)
- Antiochus** Take the boy from her. Woman, stand apart.
 (*The soldiers separate them*)
If thou dost love thy child ——
- Hannah** (*Sobbing*): Oh, king, my boy!
- Antiochus** If thou dost love him, thou wilt save his life.
Thou knowest how thine other sons were slain.
- Hannah** (*Falling before him and clinging to his robe*):
O mercy, king; he is so small, so weak;
I gave the others ——
- Antiochus** (*Shaking her off*): Listen! Unless thou,
His mother, canst persuade him to obey
My laws, forsake his creed and be a Greek,
He, like thine other sons, will suffer death.
In this hand hold I friendship, honor, life—
In this hand hold I slow and painful death;
Help him to choose between them.
 (*A long silence; finally Hannah raises her
 head.*)

- To do thy bidding—dress in red and gold—
Or dost thou then prefer the torture fire?
- Ezra** King, I am but a lad. Until this day
I knew no choice between the good and bad;
My mother's voice hath been my only law;
Her words were clear to me—and I obey—
Proud that I have a mother such as she,
Proud that my brothers suffered death for God,
Proud that she finds their loyalty in me!
- Antiochus** Be silent!
- (*To soldiers*) Take the braggart to his death.
- Ezra** (*As they take him past Hannah*): I'm not
afraid—but, mother, come with me.
- Hannah** (*Stretching out her hands to him*): Ezra!
- Ezra** (*The soldiers thrust her aside and take him off
L. She falls upon the rug and buries
her face in the silken scarf Ezra has left
there.*)
- Glaucus** (*To Antiochus, who has risen*): Oh, show
him mercy for his mother's sake!
- Antiochus** (*Sharply*): Thy softness ill becomes a soldier,
friend!
- Go thou at once; tell those who torture him,
If he relents at any time, he lives.
- (*Glaucus leaves L., with a backward glance at
Hannah, who lies motionless.*)
- Antiochus** (*Coming to her and speaking to her mock-
ingly*): Thy last son slain, and him I
would have spared.
- Ye Jews prate often of the love ye bear
Your children. Surely thou art mad—
A Jewish mother slaying all her sons.
- (*Hannah rises, the scarf in her hands. She
does not seem to hear Antiochus.*)

Antiochus Although thou askest not, I spare thy life!
Thou shalt live on, a memory to thy faith;
When thou dost pass the Jewish folk will cry:
"There goeth Hannah, last of all her race—
Mad Hannah, she who gave her sons to death.
She trusted God. He was not there to save."
*(Goes to R. door and pauses to laugh mock-
ingly.)*

Pray to thy God, O Hannah; He is strong,
Yet did not save one only son for thee.

*(Antiochus goes out laughing. Enter Glaucus
from L. Hannah remains motionless, star-
ing before her; tries to speak—fails.)*

Hannah *(With an effort):* And—is—he—dead?
(Glaucus nods, unable to speak.)

Hannah And—he—was—not—afraid?

Glaucus *(With difficulty):* He died most manfully,
giving praise to God.

Hannah I thank Thee, God, that Thou didst make him
strong. *(She walks aimlessly to the edge
of the dais, where she stands fondling the
scarf.)*

Glaucus *(Suddenly):* I know that He is God, and
none beside,
When old and young take joy to die for Him.
*(With a sudden impulse he pulls the jewels
from his neck and arms and flings them
to the ground. He tears off his sword
and breaks it across his knee.)*

They—they have shown how base a thing I am.
No longer will I wear the tyrant's robes,
No longer wear his chains about my throat.
I'll to the mountains, bow myself in shame
Before the feet of Judas, my old friend—
Beg him to let me take the field with him,
And die a clean man fighting for my God!

*(He comes humbly to Hannah and kneels
before her.)*

Thy blessing first, O mother of strong men!

*(For a moment Hannah does not answer.
She rises, holding the scarf to her breast.
She mechanically places her hand on the
man's bowed head, but she looks dreamily
away through the door through which they
have taken Ezra.)*

Hannah

(Wearily): Would I had died—as they, my
sons, have died.

ACT IV

Before the Temple at Jerusalem. At the R. steps leading into the Temple. At L. a stone seat where Hannah sits, still dressed in mourning garments. Women and children come running in from L. Some carry palms, others flowering boughs. They look back toward L., then gather at the center of the scene.

A Woman Judas! Behold he comes, a conqueror!

A Woman A hammer to the heathen hath he been.

A Woman He hath restored Jerusalem to us.

A Woman God taught his hands to war and save our land.

Women Hail, Judas, our deliverer and our king!

(Judas Maccabeus enters at the head of his soldiers, among them Glaucus, in the dress of a common soldier. Simon walks beside Judas carrying the scroll of the Law. Some women throw their branches before Judas. All shout his name. Several priests follow.)

People Hail, Judas, our deliverer and our king!

Judas *(Holding up his hands for silence)*—

Nay, not your king, my people; rather praise
The Lord of Hosts—beneath His wings we
rest—

And He from out the net hath plucked our
feet.

Leah *(Coming forward with her child)*—

Deliverer of Israel, let my child
Bow down to kiss thine hand, that he may tell
His children's children of this glorious day.

Judas The God of Jacob shall they praise, not me,
For I was but a sword within His grasp.

*(The child slips away, and is seen to enter
the Temple a few moments later.)*

Priest *(Singing from the Temple steps, other priests
clustering about him)—*

Give unto the Lord, O ye sons of the mighty,
Give unto the Lord glory and strength.

Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His
name;

Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

A Woman The heathens have defiled our holy place.

(Wailing among the people.)

Judas *(To his soldiers):* Go ye within the Temple
and destroy

The images and altars that they made.

*(The soldiers pass into the Temple with the
exception of Simon, who stands holding
the scroll, and Glaucus, who goes to the
bench where Hannah crouches.)*

Judas *(To the priests):* Ye priests who take your
pleasure in the Law,

Cleanse ye the sanctuary—build anew

An altar to the God who saveth us.

Make ye new holy vessels—straightway bring

The candlestick, the incense and the lamps;

Sound harps and cithern; let your voices rise

In praise of Him who leadeth us to war;

And let this dedication for eight days

Continue for His glory and His name.

*(The priests pass into the Temple. The
women gather about Hannah as though to
comfort her. Glaucus comes humbly to
Judas.)*

- Judas** (*In a tone of command*): Go thou within the Temple with the rest.
- Glaucus** I?—I am too unworthy to go in,
For I have sinned against the living God.
- Judas** (*Coldly*): Thou hast fought as a valiant man for Him—
He will forgive thee and forget thy sin.
- Glaucus** (*Pleadingly*): Thou—thou wilt not forgive me—nor will He.
- Judas** (*Struggling with himself and turning away*):
I have forgiven thee ——
- Glaucus** (*Catching his hand*): 'Tis not enough—
Give me thy brother love—thine early trust—
Then only dare I think that God forgives.
- Judas** (*Giving him both hands, over which Glaucus bows his head*)—
Peace, brother! All is well 'twixt thee and me.
(*Soldiers come from the Temple.*)
- Johanan** We have destroyed the heathen images.
- Priest** (*Appearing upon the steps*)—
We cannot light the lamps—there is no oil,
Save that polluted by the Syrian's hands.
- Simon** No holy oil—the lamps remain unlit!
- Child** (*Running to Leah and giving her a cruse*)—
O mother, see the cruse of oil I found
While playing in the Temple—see the cruse!
- Leah** (*Holding up the cruse*): 'Tis still unopened,
ready for the lamps! (*She takes it to the priest.*)
- Priest** (*Raising it, that the people can see*)—
A miracle—a miracle of God—
This sacred oil shall fill the holy lamps.
(*Goes back to Temple.*)

Judas (*To the women*): Mothers of Israel, join in
 the song

The priests and soldiers sing unto the Lord,
And bear aloft fair boughs and waving palms,
That we may enter, as in days of old
Our father David went unto the Lord.

 (*The priest appears upon the Temple steps.
 The other priests come down, carrying
 lighted lamps.*)

Priest The Lord of Hosts is with us.

People The God of Jacob is our Refuge.

Judas (*Taking scroll from Simon*): Our Law—our
 Light—shall first be carried in;
The worthiest shall bear it. Who is he?

People Thou! Thou, O Judas!

Judas Nay, friends, let it be
The one who suffered most for Israel.

Glaucus (*Drawing Hannah forward*): Hannah, who
 gave to God her dearest joy,
Her seven sons—she is the worthiest.

People Aye, give the Law to Hannah.

Hannah (*Who has drawn herself up proudly, now
 bows meekly before Judas*)—

Who am I?

A mother in Israel whom the Lord hath
blessed

With worthy sons. No honor can I claim,
But thank our God for whose great name
they die. (*Steps back among women.*)

Judas

(His eyes falling upon Leah's child): The child shall bear the Light of Israel!

(Puts scroll into the child's hands and takes him to the priest.)

When we have done our work and gone our ways,

The child shall hold aloft the sacred light

Till every nation bows before our God.

O God of Israel, after weary months

Of toil and heartbreak, Thou hast led us back,

Back to our Temple and our rescued shrines,

Back to the longed-for, holy hills of home!

With trembling hands we light the sacred lamps,

We watch the altar flames ascend to Thee—

Take Thou our hearts, a lowly sacrifice,

Our hearts that thirsted for Jerusalem.

(They form a procession at the foot of the steps; first the child with the scroll, then the priests, some with lamps, some with palms and branches, finally the stringed instruments; next the women; the soldiers with Judas at their head. Hannah stands by the bench. The priest remains on the steps of the Temple.)

Priest

(Singing): Lift up your heads, O ye gates,
And be ye lift up, ye ancient doors;
And the King of Glory shall come in.

People

Who is the King of Glory?

Priest

The Lord, strong and mighty,

The Lord, mighty in battle.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates;

Yea, lift them up, ye ancient doors;

And the King of Glory shall come in.

People Who is the King of Glory?

Priest The Lord of Hosts,
He is the King of Glory.

*(For a moment there is heard only the
stringed instruments borne by the priests
and the joyful sobbing of the women.
Then the priest mounts to the highest
step.)*

Priest Into the Temple to give praise to God!

*(The people move forward, singing songs of
praise.)*

People O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good;
For His mercy endureth forever.
Let Israel now say
That His mercy endureth forever.
Let the house of Aaron now say
That His mercy endureth forever.
Let them now that fear the Lord say
That His mercy endureth forever.

*(They pass, singing, into the Temple. As
the last soldier disappears, Hannah starts
to follow them. She reaches the steps,
hesitates, sinks down upon them, her head
on her arms, weeping. Above her sob-
bing comes the song of triumph from the
Temple.)*

People *(Within):* Let them now that fear the Lord
say
That His mercy endureth forever.

A SICK PURIM

A MODERN PURIM PLAY

In One Act

NOTES TO THE PRODUCER

The little play can be produced on even a very small stage by a judicious arrangement of the furniture. It may be given at the end of a vestry or school room; if no curtains can be obtained, high folding screens may be used.

For beds, it is possible to use cots, or even couches or arm-chairs, covering them with blankets.

The sick children should be dressed for the night, the boys in flannel pajamas, the girls in flannel night-robes or pajamas. The nurse wears the conventional uniform, which may be suggested by a striped blue and white house-dress and white apron and cap; the children from the party wear pretty party clothes. The "dress-up clothes" assumed during the play should be used for several rehearsals; if there is any difficulty in putting them on, the actors, by pre-arrangement, should help each other during the scene. Kitty's crutch, if found undesirable, may be omitted, the child having one foot bandaged to suggest a cast, and dragging it as she walks. The play should be given in a spirit of frolic to suggest the old Purim-spiel. Though there should be no burlesquing of the scenes between Mordecai and Esther, Esther being the one "straight" part in the little play, as much by-play as possible should be introduced, the children being urged to suggest any humorous "business" that occurs to them.

Vashti's dance may be any fancy dance learned at dancing school. It is always possible to secure an appropriate record for accompaniment; if a Victrola cannot be obtained, the music can be played upon a piano. Any suitable Purim song may be introduced.

CHARACTERS

MISS JACOBSEN*The Night Nurse*

KITTY.....*A Lame Girl Who Walks with a Crutch*

SAMUEL*A Boy of Nine*

(Just getting over Measles, and very cross)

LEAH, his Sister (hardly sick at all).....*About Seven*

MAX*Just Admitted to the Ward*

(Very cross at missing the Purim Party)

RUTH.

JOHN (who has just left the sick room).

SARAH.

TIME—Erev Purim, about 8 o'clock.

PLACE—Hospital in Orphanage.

A Sick Purim

PROLOGUE

To be spoken before the curtain by Miss Jacobsen, wearing her nurse's uniform.

Good Purim, dear children! I'm sorry to say
We can't all be together on this happy day.
There are four little children, as cross as can be,
Who've been scolding and crying and pleading with me.
These four little dears in an orphanage dwell,
Where most of the youngsters are happy and well,
And keep merry Purim with laughter today;
But Leah and Kitty, Max and Sam stay away
From the gay Purim party, because they are sick
With measles.

(Loud groans and crying behind the curtain; she listens, shakes her head despairingly, and turns to audience.)

Good bye!

(More crying and scolding behind the curtain; she goes toward the right exit.)

I must go to them quick—
I'll tuck them in bed. I'm afraid, children dear,
These children will have a sick Purim this year.

(Runs off as the noise grows louder and the curtain rises upon the scene of the play.)

A Sick Purim

As the curtain rises, Miss Jacobsen, dressed in a nurse's uniform, is seen trying to coax Samuel, already in pajamas, to go to bed. The scene represents a sick ward. To the left of the audience two wash-stands, covered with white towels, on which stand tooth-brush mugs, wash-bowl and pitcher. A rack for towels. At the extreme right end of room, a door leading into the hall. Near door, a table covered with bright tidy, on which stands a flowering plant, several toys, books, etc. Against the back wall, feet toward the audience, stand four little beds, the clothes of the occupants neatly folded on chairs near by. Next to the back wall, about the center, stands an open victrola. In the beds, tucked up for the night, are Kitty, Leah and Max. Miss Jacobsen stands in the center of the room trying to force Samuel gently into bed.

Miss Jacobsen (*coaxingly*): Now come on and jump into bed, Sammie, and you'll get a nice baked apple tomorrow morning for your breakfast.

Samuel (*crossly*): I'm sick of baked apples and toast and all your baby food. I want to sit at the table and chew like everybody else. I'm sick of eating in bed.

Miss J. (*drawing him toward the empty bed*): Well, the doctor said you could leave the ward tomorrow if you were all well again.

Samuel (*examining arms and chest*): I'm well now. I haven't got a single measle left. And I'm going down to the Purim party. (*Starts for the door.*)

Leah (*from her bed*): Oh, brother, come back. You can't go in those clothes.

Samuel (*threatening her*): You keep still.

Miss J.: Samuel, that is no way to talk to your sister.

Samuel: I can't help it if she's my sister, can I? And she don't need to think she can boss me. And I can, too, go any place in these clothes. It's Purim, and on Purim you can dress up as funny as you want to.

Miss J.: Well, I can't have you catching cold, even if you are a bad boy. (*She picks him up, puts him in bed and calmly covers him up in spite of his struggles.*) Now stay there or I don't know what I'll do to you. I've been nursing in orphan asylums for ten years and you're the worst boy I ever found in any of them.

Leah (*anxious to defend him*): He isn't a very bad boy, Miss Jacobsen. He's just worse 'cause he don't like having the measles.

Kitty: Well, I don't like having them either. But it's just like being an orphan or being lame or having freckles in summer. Only measles are much nicer. You get over 'em sometime.

Max (*suddenly burying his head in his pillows and bursting into sobs*): Boo—boo—hoo——! I wanted to go to the Purim party.

Miss J. (*going to comfort him*): Be a sensible boy, Max. You know you can't be with the other children when you've got the measles. They'd get sick, too.

Max (*sitting up and speaking savagely*): I wish they'd all get sick—I wish every child in this orphan asylum would get measles all over his face. I do!

Leah (*shocked*): It's bad to wish that.

Kitty: Sometimes when people wish bad things they come true.

Max: I wish they would. If everybody else in the asylum got the measles they wouldn't have to keep us up here all by ourselves. We could have a big party all together. (*Bitterly*) I wouldn't care so much if I hadn't got sick just this morning. Why didn't the old measles wait another day and I could have gone to the party!

Miss J. (*soothing him*): There—there—don't cry. You'll be well before you know it, and then we're all going to the circus. Everyone of us.

Kitty: And see the fairy lady who rides the horse?

Leah: —— and the tumbling men?

Samuel (*forgetting to be cross*): —— and the performing tigers and lions —— (*growing gloomy again*) But I don't expect to go. On the day before the circus I'll break my neck or leg or something, and have to stay in bed for a month. I always do.

Miss J.: Children, you must stop talking. Max, let me take your temperature before you go to sleep. (*She takes out thermometer, puts it in his mouth and reads it.*) Now lie still or you'll run up a temperature.

Max: What's that?

Leah (*proud of her knowledge*): It's something horrid. I had one last week.

Samuel: Aw, stop your bragging.

Miss J.: Quiet, everybody! (*She goes from bed to bed, turning pillows, tucking up, etc. Turns out light except bulb near door.*)

Samuel (*whining*): Miss Jacobsen, I want another drink, please.

Miss J. (*at door*): Why, Samuel, I gave you two glasses since supper.

Samuel: But my throat is hot and thirsty all the time.

Miss J.: Then you have a fever, and I'll have to give you some more of those black pills.

Samuel (*hastily*): I'm not thirsty any more. My throat feels fine. (*Sweetly*) Have a nice time at the party, Miss Jacobsen.

Miss J.: Thank you. Good night, children.

Children: Good night!

(Miss Jacobsen goes out, leaving the door open. For a minute or two there is silence. Then from the party comes the sound of music, laughter, applause.)

Kitty (*wistfully*): They're giving the Purim program now.

Leah: Last year I did a special dance between the acts of the play. Everybody said it was wonderful.

Samuel: I'd rather be here in bed with the measles than have to see you dance it again.

Leah (*throwing her pillow at him*): You're the meanest brother in the world.

Max: Ssh—or Miss Jacobsen'll come up and give us fits. Remember how I was the king, and wore a gold crown and a red robe and everything?

Samuel (*warming up a little*): Nobody in the back seats could hear you, but they all said you looked fine anyhow. And remember how you had them hang Haman——

Kitty: I've always been so sorry for Haman.

Samuel: Sorry for Haman?

Max: Why, he was a bad man.

Kitty: Maybe he couldn't help it. Maybe when he was little his mother never sent him to a Sabbath School or anything.

Leah: That doesn't make any difference. Now there's my brother Samuel. If you kept him in the best Sabbath School in the world from Saturday morning till next Saturday night, he'd be as bad as ever.

Samuel (*furiously*): You keep still. (*He flings back her pillow, adding his own for good measure.*)

(A sound at the door.)

Leah: See what you've done. Miss Jacobsen heard you, and now she'll scold all of us just because you're bad.

Max: Ssh! Pretend you're asleep.

(They all draw the cover up to their chins, Samuel even pretending to snore. Through the open door creep two girls and a boy dressed in their holiday best. The boy turns on the lights and reveals himself as John, a bright paper cap on his head, a plate of ice cream in one hand, a bag of candy in the other. Ruth follows him, also wearing a paper cap; she carries a plate of cookies. Last comes Sarah, wearing a black mask and carrying a basket of fruit.)

Leah *(sitting up in bed)*: Well, what do you want?

Kitty: You'd better run out of here quick, or you'll catch the measles.

Sarah *(putting fruit on table)*: No, we won't. We've all had 'em, and Miss Jacobsen says you can't catch them again right away.

John *(putting his contributions on table)*: We grabbed these for you at the Purim party —

Ruth *(taking off her mask)*: And came up here without anybody seeing us. *(Puts cookies on the table.)* I brought all the cookies I found in the pantry. *(Holds one up.)* Aren't they funny? Shaped like a little pointed hat!

Sarah: They're called Hamontaschen—Haman always wore a cocked hat like this *(points to her paper cap)*.

Kitty: Remember Haman in the play last year? Oh, I wish we could have another play!

John: Let's have a Purim play. It'll be more fun than their program down stairs.

Samuel: We don't know the parts.

Leah: I do. I went to every rehearsal last year just to watch the others, and I know almost every word in it.

Kitty: So do I.

Sarah (*sitting on Leah's bed*): My brother was Mordecai last year, and I had to teach him his part. I know every word of it. (*Shaking her fist and speaking fiercely*): No, cursed Haman, never will I bow before thee—Never!—NEVER—NEVER!

Ruth (*running up to them*): And Max was the king last year, too. You'll be king, won't you, Max?

Max (*sitting up and glaring at her*): I will—not! I'm supposed to be sick with a temperature—whatever that is—and, anyhow, I couldn't be a king dressed in pajamas; and, moreover, I wouldn't be one just now for anything. I'm sick. (*Gets under the covers and pretends to be asleep.*)

John and Ruth (*forcing him to sit up*): Come on—and play it. You made a grand king—be a sport, etc.

Max (*whining*): How can I be a king on an empty stomach? Miss Jacobsen wouldn't give me a thing to eat for supper but chicken broth and toast. She wants to starve me.

John (*rushing to table and bringing him an apple and a handful of cookies*): Here's something to keep you going till breakfast.

Sarah and Leah (*who has jumped out of bed and put on kimono and bedroom slippers which were on her chair*): Now you'll play the king, won't you, Max? Please, Max—yes, **Max**.

Max (*his mouth full*): I feel too sick.

Ruth: You'll forget yourself when you start acting. (*She and John drag him out of bed, put on his bathrobe and slippers, and fasten John's hat on his head.*)

John: Three cheers for King Ahasuerus!

Max (*sulkily*): I won't play—I'm too sick.

Ruth (*dragging him to table*): Take some more cookies.

Max (*sitting down before table and gulping down ice cream as soon as they turn away*): I feel too sick to eat.

Leah: Now who'll be Haman? (*Laughingly*) Let Samuel play Haman. He's so cross and cranky tonight he can be Haman just fine without a rehearsal.

Samuel (*making a face at her*): Smarty! Just for that I won't play.

Sarah: All right—then I'll act Haman.

Samuel (*jumping out of bed in alarm*): You can't do it right, 'cause you're a girl. I remember a lot of it from last year, and I can make it up as I go along. (*Sits on floor and puts on his slippers.*)

Kitty (*getting painfully out of bed and reaching for her crutch on the chair*): Will you do your dance, Leah?

Leah: Of course. (*Samuel groans, but she pretends not to hear him.*) And I guess I'll be Queen Esther, too. I remember most of her part.

Kitty: I wish I could be Queen Esther just for once—but a queen can't be lame, can she?

Leah (*after a minute's hesitation goes to her and kisses her*): I don't see why not. You play Esther. I'd rather act Vashti, anyhow.

Kitty (*throwing her arms around her*): You're just the nicest girl I know.

Samuel (*struggling into bathrobe*): Mush!

John: Well, I've always wanted to take the Fool's part——

Max (*over his shoulder, his mouth full*): You can do that without any rehearsing——

Ruth: And I'll take the parts nobody else wants; I'll be the Scribe and the Messenger and all the Courtiers and everybody.

Samuel: She thinks she's the whole show.

Leah: Now we'll have to dress up for it. Whatever will we wear?

Sarah (*clapping her hands joyfully*): Goodie—Goodie! I know! I know!

Samuel: Better tell somebody then, instead of jumping around like crazy.

Sarah: Boys, just sneak into Miss Jacobsen's room across the hall and bring in her trunk. When I was getting over the chicken-pox up here she showed me all her party dresses and we had a lovely time. And bring her new hat, too, if you can find it. But be awful quiet. (*All the boys go out on tiptoe.*) Now, girls, let's fix the stage.

Leah (*pulling two more chairs up to table*): Here's the table and three chairs for the banquet——

Ruth (*helping Sarah move one of the beds to the front and placing it lengthwise*): This will be a fine throne (*piles it high with pillows from the beds and covers them all with a bright rug from the floor*). And, Kitty, put a chair over there (*pointing left*) for Vashti's bedroom. (*Kitty obeys.*)

Leah (*from door*): Here are the boys with the trunk. Let me open it.

Samuel (*pushing her away*): You always want to be first at everything—get away. (*While they are quarreling, John opens the trunk and begins passing out the garments.*)

John: Here are some kimonas, girls—and a red plush bathrobe——

Max (*wrapping himself in it and struggling up and down*): Make way for the King Ahasuerus—make way for the King of Persia.

Leah (*dressing herself in a pretty blue kimona*): I'll look just like Vashti as soon as I let my hair loose (*begins to tug at her hair ribbons*).

Sarah: Kitty, you'll look perfectly lovely in Miss Jacobsen's white party dress. I'll just have to pin it up for you (*begins to help her dress*), and Ruth, find me something for her hair.

Ruth (*after diving into trunk*): This lovely beaded shawl over your head and shoulders—Kitty, you'll look just like a queen.

John (*who has been tying colored scarfs around his waist and arms, pulling on one green and one red stocking over his shoes to form hose, and putting on a bright rubber bathing cap*): I'm all ready to play the Jester.

Samuel: I'll not dress up much for Haman. What's the use of bothering? (*Puts on a long military cape from trunk, winds bath towel from rack around head for turban, and adjusts black mask Sarah has thrown on table.*) Don't I look fierce enough to kill anybody?

Ruth (*who has put on a bathing suit*): I'm all ready.

Sarah (*slipping on a Japanese kimona*): Behold Mordecai the Jew! (*Strikes an attitude.*)

Leah (*putting on feathered picture hat*): And behold Vashti, fairest of the women of Persia.

Samuel (*disgusted*): Aw, get off the earth. I'm not going to play dressing-up; it's a regular girl's game. (*Begins to pull off cape and turban.*)

Sarah and Ruth (*stopping him*): Don't you dare ——

Kitty: You'll spoil the play ——

Leah (*recklessly*): I'll tell Miss Jacobsen on you—always breaking up everything.

Samuel: Tattle-tale! Then I'll play Haman—just to please the others. (*Glaring at Leah*) But I wouldn't do it for you for a hundred dollars.

John (*standing them up in a line*): Let's see if you're all sure what parts you're going to play. Answer with your pretended names when I ask you. (*Going down line in order.*) King Ahasuerus!

Max: Here! (*But in a moment steals back to table and helps himself to a generous handful of cookies.*)

John: Vashti, who was his first queen.

Leah (*with a sweeping courtesy which causes her to lose her rather top-heavy hat*): Here, my lord.

Samuel (*half under his breath*): Smarty!

John: Haman, prime minister to the king.

Samuel: That's me—but if my sister doesn't stop showing off I'll not be in the play.

John: Mordecai, the faithful Jew.

Sarah: Present.

John: Messenger, Scribe, Courtier—the whole show.

Ruth (*laughing*): That's me.

John (*with the air of a general*): Now all go and sit down on the beds and I'll give the prologue the Jester gave last year. (*They take their places on the beds, Max leaving the table reluctantly, as the Fool addresses the real audience.*)

NOTE—During the little play the character names of the actors are used.

Fool—

Upon this merry, merry Purim day,
Come with me to old Persia, far away;
There dwelt Ahasuerus in mighty state,
And Mordecai, who won cruel Haman's hate;
And Esther, fairest maiden ever seen,
Whom the dread monarch chose to be his queen.
All these will strive to tell the Purim story,
A tale grown old, yet bright with Israel's glory.

Fool (*running to table*): Sound the harp—blow the trumpet for the great King Ahasuerus comes to his banquet. (*In a loud aside*): Come in, king, what're you waiting for?

King Ahasuerus (*sitting at table*): Now I will eat in state, and all the nobles will eat with me (*begins to eat an apple*).

Courtier (*bowing low*): Is not noble Haman invited to thy banquet, O my lord, the king?

Haman (*taking his place briskly*): You bet I am. (*Glancing over table and breaking out indignantly*): You pig, you've eaten all the ice cream.

King Ahasuerus: I knew it would melt, anyhow. And don't you call me a pig again or I'll have you beheaded.

Fool (*bowing low*): Thy majesty, dost thou hear the far sweet voice of Vashti, thy queen, a-singing in her royal bower?

Vashti (*running to the chair at left*): Wait, I'm not in my bower yet! Now what shall I sing?

Haman: Nothing!

Vashti: You keep still! I don't know the song they sang in the play last year, king, but I can sing "Annie Laurie" and "Old Kentucky Home".

Haman: Don't let her sing, O my lord, the king. She thinks she can, but she can't. Just pretend she has finished her song and save time.

King Ahasuerus (*pretending to listen*): What voice of heavenly sweetness fills the air? (*Steals an apple and nibbles it whenever he gets a chance.*)

Fool (*aside*): He don't even know the sound of his own wife's voice.

Haman (*rising and bowing*): It is the voice of Vashti, the peerless, the beautiful one—the pearl among Persian women. (*As Vashti rises and preens herself*) You don't need to get conceited. I wouldn't call you beautiful if it wasn't in the play.

King Ahasuerus (*to Courtier*): Go, O my messenger, to the queen's bower and bid her appear unveiled before me, that I may show her beauty to the princes of my realm.

Courtier (*bowing*): I will bring her hither, O my king.

Vashti: No, you won't. (*Striking an attitude as Courtier kneels before her.*) Go back and tell the king that in Persia it's not proper for women to go to parties. Tell him I won't come to his old party for a hundred dollars.

King Ahasuerus (*turning and shouting to her*): Then you can't be queen any more. Take away her robe and royal diadem.

Vashti (*taking off picture hat and giving it to Courtier*): Take thou my crown unto my lord, the king. I will away to shed my tears unseen by eyes of man. (*She pulls kimona up about her face and throws herself upon one of the beds where she sobs loudly.*)

Haman (*angrily*): Keep still or Miss Jacobsen'll hear you!

Fool: And that's the end of Vashti. Now, O king, choose a new queen or the play can't go on.

King Ahasuerus (*his mouth full of apple*): Anybody you pick out will suit me.

Vashti (*sitting up on the bed*): Go ahead and act right—you're spoiling the play!

King Ahasuerus (*with a vast gesture as he seats himself on the "throne"*): Messenger, go east and north and south and west, and bring before me all the fairest maidens of the kingdom. One will I choose for my wife and queen, and she shall sit beside me on my golden throne and wear the triple diadem of Persia. (*Pausing for breath.*) I don't know what it all means, but I remember every word of it.

Vashti (*who has been cording her kimona higher, curling her hair and primping generally*): Now it's time for you to leave your home, Esther.

Haman: Stop giving orders. You're nobody—you're banished.

Vashti: I'm coming back to do my dance before the king whether you like it or not.

Haman (*savagely*): I like it—not!

Mordecai (*drawing Esther forward*): Now I've forgotten the part. Well, I'll make it up (*embracing her*). Esther, you must go to the king's house. He may choose you for his queen.

Jester: Again—he may not. Accidents often happen in the best of families.

Esther (*indignantly*): Accidents never happen in stories—especially Bible stories. They always come out right.

Mordecai (*kissing her*): Remember, dearest niece, no matter where thou dost go, my heart will ever follow thee.

Haman: More mush!

Esther (*sobbing*): Goodbye, dearest uncle.

Mordecai: Remember just one thing, my child: never tell anybody that you are Jewish.

Courtier: I don't think that's a bit nice.

Vashti: It's all right—it's in the story.

Mordecai: I will pray for you and watch over you from afar. Farewell, my child.

Esther (*hiding her face*): Farewell—farewell! (*In a loud aside*): Tell me when I can stop crying.

Fool: The sooner the better. Now skip the part where you're made queen—the play's too long, anyhow.

Courtier (*placing Vashti's picture hat on Esther's head*): Now thou art Queen of Persia.

King Ahasuerus (*pats her shoulder and strolls back to table*): And my queen. Now go and sit down somewhere until your turn comes. (*Steals another cookie and eats it.*)

Mordecai: Now it's time for my quarrel with Haman.

Vashti: He always thinks it's time to quarrel.

Haman: You're always starting something, you mean.
(*Rises and approaches Mordecai.*) I am Haman, the king's friend and a mighty man in court. All must bow down to me. (*Turning to Jester*) Bow, Fool, bow!

Fool: Anything to oblige a gentleman (*turns a somersault*).

Haman (*to Mordecai, who pretends not to see him*): Bow down to me, O Jew—bow down to me!

Mordecai: I won't.

Haman (*threatening Mordecai*): Bow down, I say!

Mordecai: I am of the tribe of Benjamin—I am as much a prince as thee. I will bow down to my God, but never to a mere mortal man. Never—never—never!

Haman: You shall hear from me again. Haman always gets even with his enemies.

Fool: Even if his enemies get him in the end.

Haman (*kneeling before king, who is busily eating*): O my lord the king, there is a certain people in this land who are not of Persia. They obey only the laws of their God, and will not obey the laws of the king. What should be done to them?

King Ahasuerus (*his mouth full*): Anything you like. But don't bother me—I'm busy.

Haman: I will kill all the Jews if you give me your ring.

Fool: Wouldn't a gun be better?

King Ahasuerus: Here, Haman, is my signet ring, the sign of my authority. Do with the Jews what pleaseth thee the most. (*In his natural tone*): And now go away and let me alone.

Courtier: Now I'm a scribe, and I read the Chronicles to you (*sitting cross-legged before king*). What shall I read to you, O king of Persia?

King Ahasuerus: Anything at all, as long as it's funny—the Sunday funny page or——

Courtier (*taking book from table*): I will read thee from the Chronicles of Persia.

King Ahasuerus (*stealing a banana*): What's the use?

Courtier (*impatiently*): Because it's in the play. (*Pretending to read*): Once when two wicked men sought to slay the king, a Jew named Mordecai overheard their plot and told it to the king's officers.

King Ahasuerus: All right. Now pretend you've rewarded Mordecai. Give him my best horse or my best automobile, or anything he wants, and let the play go on; what comes next?

Vashti (*running forward completely transformed into a dancer*): Now you summon your royal dancers, and I come and dance before you.

King Ahasuerus: We'll leave that out.

Haman: You've got sense, Mr. King.

Vashti: I'd like to see you. My dance is in the play, and I won't let the play go on until I dance. So what are you going to do about it?

Fool: You can't do anything with a woman like that. (*Bowing low before her*): O Star of Dancers, dance a little and make glad the heart of thy worshipers.

Vashti: Thanks. (*Turning to Mordecai.*) Put a record on the victrola (*names record*). I'm a little out of practice.

Haman (*as she dances*): We can see that all right.

Fool: You look just like a cigarette ad.

Vashti (*continuing to dance*): If I didn't try to be ladylike I'd tell you what you looked like.

Esther: Please don't quarrel so much. I want to do the rest of the play.

Haman: Then make my sister stop dancing.

Vashti (*ending with a very elaborate bow*): I'll stop now, just because the dance ends (*glaring at Haman*) — or I'd dance all night, just to spite you, O mine enemy.

Mordecai (*turning off the record, puts on soft and slow record and comes forward, drawing her by the hand*): Now comes my scene with Esther. Sweet Esther, it is thou, and thou alone, canst save our people.

Esther: What must I do?

Mordecai: Go to the king, thy husband. Tell him thou art a Jewess, and plead with him that thy people be not given over to death.

Esther: It is a law in the court of Persia that no one dare come before the king unsummoned. If I should do this thing and the king would not hold out his scepter to me in token of mercy, I would be put to death.

Mordecai: Then thou wouldst die with thy people. Art thou not willing to risk all for thy kindred?

Esther: Yes, uncle. I will go to the king and plead for my people, and if I perish, I perish.

Mordecai (*embracing her*): My brave, noble child. Now go to the king.

King Ahasuerus: Now she's coming to bother me again. I wish they'd leave me alone for five minutes.

Fool: That's what you get for being a king.

King Ahasuerus: Next time I won't take the part. I'll be a dancer or something that won't take any brains.

Vashti (*flaring up*): You're trying to tease me again.

Esther: Do be quiet till I finish my part. (*She walks slowly and fearfully to the king.*) Now hold out your scepter.

King Ahasuerus: I haven't any. (*Taking her hand.*) What is thy petition, O my queen?

Esther: O my king, listen to the prayer of thy handmaid.

King Ahasuerus: Go ahead.

Esther: Wilt thou not come to a banquet I have prepared for thee?

King Ahasuerus: Sure, if you didn't do the cooking yourself.

Esther: And bring the noble Haman also to my banquet.

Haman (*sitting across from king*): I'm here already.

King Ahasuerus (*reaching for last apple*): So'm I.

Esther (*stopping him*): Wait till we're through. Now say the rest of your part.

King Ahasuerus: What is thy wish, my queen, and what is thy petition? It shall be granted thee, even to half my kingdom.

Fool: You always were good at giving away what you didn't have!

Esther: O great king, I crave my life.

King Ahasuerus: Thy life?

Esther: Ay, for I am a Jewess, and if my people perish I will perish with them.

King Ahasuerus: Who would bring evil upon thy kindred?

Esther (*pointing to Haman*): Even this wicked Haman.

Haman (*in his own whining tone*): Always picking on me.

King Ahasuerus (*rising threateningly*): Thou—thou—I forget what came next—you bad boy, you! Seize him and hang him on the gallows he has prepared for Mordecai. (*The Courtier, King, Mordecai, Vashti and Jester drag him to one of the beds and bury him beneath the pillows.*)

Vashti: Serves him right, the old cross-patch!

Haman (*thrusting his head out of the pile of bedclothes*):
You just wait till I get you alone, smarty!

King Ahasuerus (*coming back to his place*): And what else do you want, Queen Esther?

Esther: Allow my dear uncle, Mordecai, to take the place of wicked Haman.

Haman: Still picking on me!

King Ahasuerus (*calling*): Mordecai! (*Mordecai comes and kneels before him.*) Here is my ring. Now go and send out messengers to all the people of Persia. Say that the Jews shall defend themselves. And anybody who hurts them will be put in jail. And let everybody rejoice in your rejoicing, and sing Purim songs and dance and give presents and have parties. Now excuse me, 'cause I want to finish my own party. (*Sits down at table, finishes fruit and reaches for cookies.*)

Esther (*looking over table*): You've eaten up everything—you mean thing!

Vashti: You're perfectly horrid.

Haman (*joining them*): They hanged me and they let such pigs live!

Jester: Let's hang him!

(*They fall upon Max; he resists. A chair is overthrown, etc. They all raise their voices in their excitement. In the midst of the struggle Miss Jacobsen enters and looks at them in horror.*)

Miss Jacobsen: Children! Whatever are you doing?

Children: We're killing the king.

Miss J.: You'll kill yourselves if you're not careful. (*Starts hustling them into their beds, where they sit, still in their costumes.*) You may all get dreadful sick from running about like this and ——(*seeing remains of feast on table*) eating things you're not allowed to have.

Samuel (*crossly*): We didn't eat anything to hurt us. Max gobbled up everything first.

Miss J. (*groaning*): You terrible child. (*Takes out thermometer.*) I suppose you have a dreadful fever already.

Max (*cheerfully*): I don't care—that party was worth it.

All (*laughing*): It certainly was.

Leah: But I bet we'll all have a mighty sick Purim tomorrow.

THE STAR OF JUDAH

A PURIM PLAY

In Five Acts

NOTES TO THE PRODUCER

Suggestions for the simple properties used in this play will be found in the opening chapter under the heading, "Properties".

The costumes should be as rich as possible, suggesting oriental splendor, except in the case of Mordecai, who wears a simple dark robe and turban, later replaced by sackcloth. Light burlap or an ordinary potato sack is excellent for the purpose. In the first tableau, and during the earlier scenes of the first act, Esther wears a simple white robe, sleeveless, girded with a white cord and reaching to her ankles. When about to leave with the messenger she slips about her shoulders a scarf of blue or rose. In the third act she wears the same white robe with an over tunic of some bright silk of an oriental pattern. This is easily removed to be replaced by a more elaborate outer robe, closely resembling an opera cloak, which she assumes when wearing her crown jewels. It should be the same color as the king's robe, or should harmonize well with it. This costume is worn in the fourth and fifth acts, and should be worn in the tableau preceding the second act. Ahasuerus, in the second act, wears a long, loose tunic with short sleeves, made of some rich material and trimmed with gold. A gold cord about the waist and long chain about his neck; a narrow diadem worn about the head. In fourth and fifth acts he wears an outer robe of the same material as the tunic, or a long cape, fastened from the shoulders. Also an elaborate crown and more jewels.

The "harp music" off stage in the second act can be produced by stringing a violin. The dance should be as oriental in tone as possible; it can be danced by any number

of children, depending upon the talent available and the size of the stage. If for any reason a dance is out of the question, the interlude in the fourth act may be given over to a child in appropriate costume who sings before the king.

There should be no attempt at realism during the banquet. Gold flagons and cups should stand upon the table, also several gilded baskets of fruit and cake.

For the sake of dramatic expediency, the author has deviated from the Biblical story in several minor points.

CHARACTERS

AHASUERUS	.....	<i>King of Persia</i>
HAMAN	.....	<i>His Favorite</i>
MORDECAI	.....	<i>A Jew</i>
ESTHER	.....	<i>His Niece</i>
MIRIAM	.....	<i>Her Handmaid</i>
<i>Courtiers, Attendants, Dancers</i>		

ACT I—*The House of Mordecai.*

ACT II—*A Hall in the Palace.*

ACT III—*Esther's Apartments.*

ACT IV—*The Throne Room.*

ACT V—*Esther's Apartments.*

The Star of Judah

PROLOGUE

AN OLD-FASHIONED PURIM

To be spoken before the curtain by a boy dressed in the wide collar, short jacket and long pants of several generations ago.

Now I like Chanukah a lot,
And Succoth in the fall;
And Pesach; but I think that I
Love Purim most of all.

Maybe it's 'cause I like to watch
My mother when she bakes;
And help her pound the shiny stuff
She puts in Purim cakes.

The kitchen air smells awful sweet;
I just won't go away,
Till she gives me a Hamontasch,
And drives me out to play.

We go to hear Megillah read,
Me, mother and the boys,
With Dad, who doesn't scold a bit,
But seems to like our noise.

I stamp and stamp with all my might,
When Haman's name is read;
And turn my Greger with a shout (*illustrates*)
Because his sons are dead.

At home we put on mother's clothes—
Her oldest clothes, I mean;
And cousin Rachel dresses up
And tries to act a queen.

For then we give our Purim play,
And laugh and dance and cheer; (*confidentially*)
Say, don't you wish that Purim came
'Bout twenty times a year?

TABLEAUX

If the time does not permit, or the extra costumes and drilling will be too much of a tax upon the producer, the following tableaux may easily be omitted. On the other hand, if a more elaborate program is desired, they will add much to the beauty and effectiveness of the play. In some cases it is well to give only the first tableau—Esther as a young girl in the home of Mordecai—as this requires practically no rehearsing. Music, appropriate to the pictures shown, should be played during the tableaux.

TABLEAU I (before Act I). ESTHER IN THE HOME OF MORDECAI. (*Esther, her hair falling about her, her lap filled with flowers, sits upon the ground singing the song of Act III in the play. Mordecai stands looking fondly down upon her. She weaves a crown of flowers which she laughingly puts upon her head, crying playfully: "See, Uncle, I am a Queen"!*)

TABLEAU II (before Act II). ESTHER, QUEEN OF PERSIA. (*Esther, in royal robes, kneels before Ahasuerus, who is about to place a crown upon her head. The courtiers and attendants are grouped in the background.*)

TABLEAU III (before Act III). CASTING OF LOTS. (*Haman, his attendants about him, are grouped about a tall urn from which Haman draws a lot, his face evil with triumph.*)

TABLEAU IV (before Act IV). ESTHER SEEKS THE KING. (*Esther, in royal robes and crown, stands as though looking into the throne room.—Miriam clings to her hand.*)

TABLEAU V (*before Act V*). THE JEWS OF SHUSHAN FAST AND PRAY. (*Mordecai, dressed in sackcloth, stands in the midst of a group of Jews clad in sackcloth, crouching upon the ground, their faces hidden in their hands. One woman holds a small child, who looks happily about, not understanding the terror. Mordecai, with head thrown back, face uplifted in prayer.*)

TABLEAU VI (*after the play*): A DAY OF GREAT REJOICING. (*The Jews are shown rejoicing, with Mordecai, wearing Haman's cloak, and Esther, in her royal robes, standing in their midst.*)

ACT I

SCENE—The house of Mordecai; Mordecai sits on a low chair, his head resting on his hands; Esther is at his feet; Miriam, in the background, is weaving a rug.

Esther Dear Mordecai, why dost thou look so sad?

Mordecai Ah, Esther, little one, canst thou forget
This is the day on which thy mother died—
Thy mother, my sweet sister? At her death
She gave thee to my keeping—bade me guard
And cherish thee.

Esther And thou hast even been
A tender parent to me.

Miriam (*Rising.*) Some one comes.
(*Mordecai and Esther rise. Enter messenger.*)

Messenger I seek for Mordecai.

Mordecai Sir, I am he.

Messenger Thus doth command Ahasuerus, the king:
He seeks a bride, and bids the fairest maids
Throughout the kingdom shall be brought to
him.
And she, the one whom he shall love the best,
Will he make wife and queen of all the land.
Thus runs the message. Let this maid pre-
pare
And come with me.

Mordecai (*Drawing Esther to him.*) I would not see
her go.

- Messenger** It is the king's command! I wait for her
Without the gate. Let there be no delay.
(Exit Messenger.)
- Esther** *(Clinging to Mordecai.)* Oh, do not send me
from thee. Let me stay!
- Mordecai** I bow my head before the king's command.
Thou, Miriam, bring to me the casket old
Which holds the jewels that Esther's mother
wore
Upon her bridal. She shall have them now.
- Miriam** *(Taking jewels from casket.)* How beautiful!
(Puts necklace about Esther's throat.)
Thou shinest like a queen.
- Esther** *(Half weeping.)* I do—I do not wish to be a
queen.
Let me stay here, my uncle, still thy child,
Quiet and useful in the household ways,
My flowers for jewels, my doves for courtiers
fine.
- Miriam** *(Putting circlet about Esther's head.)* Thou
art a queen with crown upon thy brows!
- Mordecai** Thou mayest be chosen, Esther, for his queen.
Then thou shalt shine a star throughout our
land.
And all will bow to thee, my Maiden Star!
*(Takes mantle from Miriam, which he throws
about Esther's shoulders.)*
Thou shalt have Miriam with thee for thy
friend.
- Esther** I shall be lonely in that far-off place.

Mordecai My prayers will keep thee, daughter, from all harm.

(Places his hands on her shoulders and speaks earnestly.)

This, Esther, do I charge thee; heed my words:
Let none know of thy kindred or thy home;
Let none know of thy race or of thy God;
Pray to Him oft in secret, but no word
Of thine must breathe thou art a Jewess born.

Esther But why?

Mordecai *(Sternly.)* I would not have thee question but obey.

Who knows?—the time may come when all must learn

Thou art a Jewess and my sister's child.

Until that time be silent! *(Places hands on her head in blessing.)*

Holy One,

Who guardest Israel, guard this tender maid
Beneath the shelter of Thy brooding wings;
Oh, let her not forget her father's God!

Esther *(Raising her head and speaking with sudden resolution.)*

I'll live a Jewess and a Jewess die!

(The door opens, showing the messenger waiting outside.)

ACT II

SCENE—A hall in the palace. In the middle of the room a low couch piled with cushions. To the left a couch; at head, a pedestal with a high antique lamp. In the rear two lamps on pedestals.

A group of courtiers enter, talking among themselves. Enter Mordecai, plainly dressed.

Mordecai *(To First Courtier.)* Good sir, wilt thou not tell me of the queen?

First Courtier—

What should a Jew like thee desire to know
Of Esther, lately wedded to our king?
What can she be to thee?

Mordecai Ah, what indeed?
For she is queen, and I a hated Jew.
*(The courtiers pass to the end of the room.
Mordecai seats himself near the door.)*

Mordecai Here will I sit; perhaps she will pass by;
Then will I hide my face; she must not know
How I have longed to see her. She, the child
Who played within my garden, now the queen!
(He sits lost in thought.)

First Courtier *(Continuing conversation)—*

Aye, truly, Haman now is lifted high;
The king smiles on him and has raised his seat
Above the other princes; when he comes
Among us, all must bow and do him grace.

Second Courtier—

That is the king's command!

(Enter Haman haughtily, followed by several servants. The courtiers bow low before him. Mordecai does not move.)

(*They leave, mocking Mordecai as they pass. When alone he speaks falteringly, but unafraid.*)

Mordecai Thou knowest, Lord, 'twas not through proud
 contempt,
Nor seeking after glory that I sat
Unmoved before proud Haman. If a deed
Of mine had power to earn a gracious thought
For Israel from this man, I had bowed down
In humbleness to kiss his garment's hem.
But him I pay no honor, for I place
Man's glory far below the glory of God,
And bow alone to Thee, who art my Lord.

*(He leaves slowly, with bowed head. Enter
Ahasuerus, with attendants and courtiers.
He throws himself upon a couch and speaks
wearily.)*

Ahasuerus The night is long and I am sick for sleep.
Bid music sound, that it may bring me rest.

(Exit First Attendant.)

There passed me in the corridors a Jew
Whose thoughtful, saddened face I seemed to
know;

Who was it I saw shadowed in his eyes?

*(There comes a sound of harps playing a slow,
soft melody. Ahasuerus stirs restlessly.)*

I weary of their music; bid them cease.

(Exit a courtier.)

Ahasuerus *(To Second Attendant, as music dies away.)*
Now read me of the Chronicles; perchance
My sleeplessness will pass.

Second Attendant *(Opens scroll.)—*

Wouldst have me read
Of thy great father's victories or thine own?

Ahasuerus These weary me. I would have rest from wars.

Second Attendant—

Perchance 'twould please my gracious lord, the
king,

To hear of the campaign in Pharaoh's land.

Ahasuerus Thy gracious lord, the king, is hard to please.
Search out some record that I have not heard,
And be thou swift, or 'twill go hard with thee.

Second Attendant (*Taking another scroll.*)—

This tells of a foul plot against thy life.

Ahasuerus Read on. Who knows but this will interest me?

Second Attendant—

Once thy two chamberlains who kept the door
Turned traitors both and sought thy very life.

Ahasuerus Aye, I remember (*with sudden interest*).
Does it name the man
Who told me of their treachery? Who was he?

Second Attendant—

The records give his name as Mordecai.

Ahasuerus What dignity and honor hath been shown
To Mordecai for service to his king?

Second Attendant (*Consulting scroll.*)—

No honor hath been given him, or reward.

Ahasuerus (*Half rising.*) Both gold and honors will I
heap on him.
I know not what reward will prove most good.

First Attendant (*Entering.*)—

O king, thy servant, Haman, waits outside.

Ahasuerus Go. Bid him enter.

(*Exit Attendant.*)

Haman will advise

A fitting way to show my gratitude.

(*Enter Haman, who bows before the king.*)

Haman Oh, good my lord, thy face I sought in haste.
I come to crave a boon. Deny me not.

Ahasuerus What favor craves good Haman of his king?

Haman There is a certain people in thy land,
Dispersed and scattered, who know not thy
laws.

What profit to the king that they should live?
But if it please thee that they be destroyed,
And thou dost write it, I will pay to thee
Ten thousand silver talents in thy hand.

First Courtier (*To Second.*)—

His is a dear revenge upon the Jews.

Ahasuerus I do not wish thy silver. If thou wilt,
This alien people I will give to thee;
Then treat them as it seems to thee most good.

(*Gives him his signet ring.*)

Here is my royal signet; work thy will.

(*Haman bends to kiss the king's robe.*)

Second Courtier—

The Jews are sold unto their enemy!

Ahasuerus (*As Haman rises.*) One question, Haman,
would I ask of thee:

What should I do unto the happy man
The king delights to honor?

(*He turns to speak to attendant.*)

Haman (*To Second Courtier.*) What other man
Would he delight to honor but myself?

(*As king turns back to him.*)

For that most happy man, O gracious king,
Whom you delight to honor, let be brought
Thy royal robes, thy horse all tricked in gold,
And let the man whom thou art pleased to
bless

Be clothed in thine own robes and ride thy
horse

About the city; let it be proclaimed:

This be the man much honored by the king!

(He waits expectantly.)

Ahasuerus *(Amused.)* Well hast thou spoken, Haman!
It shall be

As thou hast said; seek thou one Mordecai,
Whom I delight to honor; let him ride
My horse along the streets and wear my robes.

(Amused looks from courtiers.)

Haman But I—my king—I did not understand!

Ahasuerus Thou hast my meaning now! It is my wish
That Mordecai be honored before men.
Now leave me, and tomorrow do my will.

*(He signs for the courtiers to leave. They
pass out with covert glances of amusement
toward Haman. He is about to follow, but
at the door turns and approaches the king
timidly.)*

Haman O king, this Mordecai is but a Jew!
How canst thou pay him honor?

Ahasuerus Thou hast heard
The words I spoke; my word must be fulfilled.
And Mordecai, thou sayest, is a Jew?

(Haman nods.)

Tomorrow honor him; ere many days
His people perish; he will suffer, too,
Unless thou dost relent.

Haman *(Fiercely.)* My lord, the king,
I honor him tomorrow—'tis thy will;
But I have cast the lots—his with the rest;
Let him be honored who so quickly dies.

(Exit Haman.)

- Ahasuerus (*To two remaining attendants.*)—
Now would I sleep; take thou the lamps away.
*(The attendants remove all the lights except
lamp near the couch. Exit attendants, leav-
ing scroll on couch.)*
- Ahasuerus So Mordecai, my savior, is a Jew,
And they, his wretched people, all must die.
What have I spoken? What great madness
wrought? (*Sitting up.*)
I shall give orders that their lives be spared,
For am I not the king?
(*Looks at his hand.*) My ring is gone;
I gave it unto Haman; by his will
They live or die—and who will stay his hand?
(*He throws himself back upon couch and
glances over scroll as curtain falls.*)

ACT III

SCENE—Esther's apartments in the palace. A low bench in center on which Esther sits.

Esther *(Sings softly as she weaves a garland.)*

Flowers in the meadow,
Sun in the sky,
Birds in the branches;
 Happy am I!
Love's hand providing me
 Honey and wine,
Love's hand enrobing me
 In purples fine.
Birds in the branches,
 Sun in the sky,
Flowers in the meadow;
 Happy am I!

(Enter Miriam hastily.)

Miriam O lady, just outside the palace gate
Sits Mordecai, thine uncle, bowed in grief
And dressed in sackcloth.

Esther Go at once to him,
And have my servants robe him like a prince,
And lead him to me.

(Exit Miriam.)

Esther For these many days
I have not seen him. Why should he be sad?
(Enter Miriam, followed by Mordecai, dressed in sackcloth; Esther goes to him joyfully.)

Esther Dear uncle, tell me why thou grieveest so?
Why art thou come to me so poorly clad?

- Miriam** (*As Mordecai turns away*)—
He hath refused the robes thy servants
brought.
- Esther** Speak, uncle, is it any fault of mine?
Thou art not angry with me? Do not dream
That in this palace I forget my home.
I have not sent for thee nor spoke thy name
Because thou didst forbid me show my race
Or kindred, else I long ago had sought
To have thee with me.
- Mordecai** Miriam, leave us now.
(*Exit Miriam. He turns to Esther.*)
Thou hast obeyed most faithfully my com-
mand.
Suppose I lay on thee a harder task:
Wilt thou submit to me as in old days?
- Esther** Yes, uncle. Tell me now why thou art sad.
- Mordecai** Here, Esther, in the palace comes no sound
Of tears or lamentations; but without
The gates the Jews in sackcloth sit and mourn.
- Esther** The Jews in trouble?
- Mordecai** We have learned the king
Hath given us to Haman for his prey.
Would my poor life suffice to feed his hate,
Right gladly would I give it; but he craves
The life of every Jew for his revenge.
(*A pause.*)
Canst thou not guess, my child, what new
command
I would lay on thee?
- Esther** What, then, must I do?
- Mordecai** Go seek the king, thy husband; bid him spare
The Jews for thy sake, who art one of them.

- Esther** These many days he hath not sent for me.
It is the law that he who seeks the king,
Not being summoned, shall be put to death,
Unless the king in mercy holds to him
His scepter. (*Clings to him.*) Do not bid me
 seek the king.
- Mordecai** Thou art a Jewess, and thy soul should turn
Unto thy brethren in their bitter need.
If they must die, the tender and the strong,
Brave men and little children, wouldst thou
 live?
Be thou a Jew—and with us live or die.
- Esther** How canst thou bid me fling my life away?
- Mordecai** What is thy life worth if thy people die?
Art thou not one of us, and dost thou dream
Thou shalt escape? But if deliverance fails
To come from thee, perchance the living God
Will rescue us without thy grudging aid!
 (*He turns away in anger.*)
- Esther** (*Following him.*) Do not be angry, uncle; I
 will do
What thou dost bid me.
 (*He turns.*)
- But I am afraid,
Ah, sore afraid! I am so young to die.
Too frail and timid for a people's voice.
How dare I go unsummoned to the king?
- Mordecai** (*Soothing her.*) Thy father's God will shield
 thee in this hour.
True, thou art young and fragile; yet our Lord
Through one as weak as thou can work His
 will.
Who knows but thou wast chosen but for this:
To flame a Star of Hope to those who die,

To gleam a Star of Blessing through the dark,
To shine a Star of Rescue and of Peace?

(She hides her face, weeping bitterly.)

Thou must be strong, child, for thy people's
sake.

Esther

(Through her tears.) O God, who looks upon
the strong and weak,

Make Thou me strong who am of faltering
heart.

Breathe in me courage. Should I perish, Lord,
Let me die nobly for the love of Thee.

Mordecai

I knew thou wouldst not fail us! *(Calls)*:
Miriam, come!

(Enter Miriam.)

Now deck thy mistress in her fairest robes,
Bring jewels to shine upon her breast and
brow,

And make her fair, that she will please the
king.

Miriam

*(After leaving room, returns with robe, crown,
etc., and decks Esther.)*

But mistress, surely thou must not appear
Before the king unsummoned.

Esther

I must go.

Perhaps my death awaits me. Then must thou
Return unto my uncle; keep his house;
And thou wilt tend my flowers and my doves,
And often speak of me who died so young.

Miriam

O lady, do not, do not seek the king!

Esther

Nay, I must go.

Miriam

Then I will go with thee,
For I care not to live if thou must die.

Esther

Girl, I will not permit thee ——

Mordecai Let her go!

(Arranging her scarf.)

Nay, do not tremble, Esther; have no fear.
Plead with the king that he may spare the
Jews.

Esther I dare not go.

Mordecai Be brave; we trust in thee.

(Leads her to door.)

Esther I know not what to say—I am afraid ——

Mordecai The Lord will teach thee when the moment
comes;

He keeps the feet of those who trust in Him.

Esther *(With hands uplifted.)* If I must perish, I
will perish! God,

Oh, make me worthy of the honor shown
To Thy poor handmaid! Take away my fear.

*(Exit Esther, leaning on Miriam. Mordecai
stands at door, looking after them.)*

Mordecai *(Picks up one of the flowers she has dropped,
looks at it sadly; speaks in a broken voice):*
And if she dies I sent her to her death!

ACT IV

SCENE—The throne room. Ahasuerus upon his throne in center, a guard with drawn sword on either side. Courtiers grouped about him. Ahasuerus in conversation with Haman.

Third Courtier (*To Second*)—

Ay, now is Haman lifted in his heart.
He plans within three days that every Jew
Throughout the realm shall perish. He hath
raised

A towering gallows fifty cubits high
Whereon he will hang Mordecai, his foe.

Haman O king, if 'tis thy pleasure, I have brought
Together dancers who will strive to win
Thy praise. They are assembled in the court.

Ahasuerus (*To First Attendant.*) Summon the dancers.
(*To Haman.*)

Thou dost never lack
In deeds of thoughtfulness to please thy king.
(*Enter dancers. They bow before the king
and begin a slow and elaborate dance, during
which Esther is seen to enter, clinging
to Miriam. The king and court, watching
the dance, do not observe her.*)

Esther O Miriam, my feet are slack as Death!
How can I look on colors and bright light,
And hear soft music, when I fear this hour
Will take all joys and colors from my life?

Miriam Be steadfast, mistress! Was't not said of old:
The Lord my fortress is—He is my rock,
My shield and my deliverer, my high tower;
I will call on the Lord, who shall be praised,
And He will save me from mine enemies?

Esther Ah, little Miriam, if thou, a child,
Hast such high courage, why should I, the
queen,
Shrink in the hour when God calls on me?
(*The dance ends. A courtier sees Esther and
a whisper of "The Queen" passes from
mouth to mouth. All move aside to let her
pass, and motioning Miriam to remain be-
hind, she advances slowly to the king.*)

Second Attendant—

He hath not summoned her—will it be death?
(*Esther stands before Ahasuerus. He holds
out his scepter. Esther touches it.*)

Ahasuerus What wilt thou, Esther? What is thy request?
It shall be given thee, though thou shouldst
ask
The half of this, my kingdom.

Esther This is my prayer:
If it seem good unto my lord, the king,
Let the great king and Haman come this day
Unto the banquet that I have prepared.

Ahasuerus Thy wish is granted thee. Come, take thy
place.
(*He takes her hand and places her beside him
on the throne.*)

Haman (*Bowing low to Esther.*) This dazzling honor
blinds me like the sun!

(*To Second Courtier*)—

Besides the king she asks no other guest
Save me; I have waxed mighty in the land.
(*Ahasuerus by a gesture commands the dancers
to resume their performance. During the
dance the curtain falls.*)

ACT V

SCENE—Esther's apartments. Same as Act III, except that in center of stage are placed a table covered with crimson cloth, set for banquet, and three couches or low stools.

Esther *(To Miriam, who is arranging the table for three)—*

The hour hath come when my great lord, the
king,

And Haman, our destroyer, come to me.

The king was gracious to me when I stood

Before him. Will his heart incline to me

When I plead for my people? Will he hear

My voice and save my nation for my sake?

Miriam *(Wonderingly.)* Thou art afraid no longer?

Esther Now I feel

That God has chosen me from all my race,

Tho weak and fearful, to do battle for Him,

And break my people's chains and give them
peace.

Miriam *(At door.)* It is Ahasuerus and Haman, come
Unto thy banquet.

(Enter king and Haman and two attendants.)

Esther Welcome, gracious king,

And lordly Haman, mighty among men.

*(They seat themselves and Miriam serves them.
The attendants remain behind the king's
chair.)*

Ahasuerus Surely, Queen Esther, when thou cam'st to me
Without a summons, risking thus thy life,
Thou hadst some other goodly boon to crave
Than coming to this banquet.

Esther That request
I dared not utter then; now I will speak.

Ahasuerus Speak, Esther, thy request is granted thee;
Even to half my kingdom, it is thine.

Esther (*Rising.*) If I find favor in thy sight, O king,
And if it please thee, let my life be given,
And spare my people, too, at my request,
For we are doomed to perish utterly.

Ahasuerus Who is the wretch who thinketh in his heart
To do this thing?

Esther Our adversary and our enemy;
Even this wicked Haman, who would kill
The Jews. But if he slay them, let me die
A Jewess with the doomed of my dear race!

Ahasuerus A Jewess! Thou!

Esther A Jewess, O my king!

Ahasuerus (*Rising and speaking fiercely to Haman*)—
O thou, who soughtest to destroy a race,
Wouldst thou slay the true man who saved my
life,
Good Mordecai? And wouldst thou then bring
low
The blood of Esther, that she perish, too?
'Tis thou shalt suffer for that wicked hope!

Haman (*Falling before Esther*)—
Oh, save me, Esther; turn his wrath away!
Let him not slay me!

Ahasuerus (*Giving the ring to Mordecai*)—

It is thine;
Henceforth thou shalt be mighty in the realm.
For thou art kin to Esther, my fair queen,
And just thou art, and worthy before men.
Give orders that the Jews protect themselves
Against their enemies—be it thy care
That they shall be victorious, not destroyed.

Esther (*Prostrates herself before him*)—

O husband, no poor, foolish word of mine
Can thank thee for this mercy!

Mordecai (*As Ahasuerus raises Esther*)—

Thank instead
Our God, who would not let His people die.



THE PAGEANT OF ESTHER

A PURIM PAGEANT

In Eleven Scenes

NOTES TO THE PRODUCER

This pageant may be substituted for the long historical play, "Star of Judah". It may be given very simply, with several of the scenes omitted, and much of the business simplified. It has been given successfully with seventy-five children. On the other hand, a most inspiring spectacle was presented at the first performance, when over three hundred children, from the primary department up to the post-confirmation classes, were used. It will be found an admirable vehicle for the use of several large Sabbath Schools planning a joint celebration. In this case the principals may be drawn from the different schools, the groups divided, viz.: First school taking merchants, second school, Jews, etc. The pageant, if presented as a simple pantomime, may be given upon a small platform without scenery. If given on an elaborate scale, a large stage should be used, and various lighting effects employed. For a simple setting, all that is needed is the conventional "throne", a table and a few chairs to suggest the outer court of the palace; to the left, a couch and several chairs in the background for the Women's Pavilion; a screen for the door of Mordecai's house near the right wing. If real scenery can be obtained, the stage should be set at the beginning of the action and the picture remain throughout the pageant. In this case, the exterior of Mordecai's house is shown; tables and chairs are brought in for the banquet as indicated in the action; the pavilion is arranged on a raised dais reached by a flight of steps. Instead of dropping a curtain between the scenes, it has been found advisable to indicate the passing of time by darkening

the scene, or clearing the stage for a moment, and playing the same musical cue that is used throughout the action to suggest a change of scene.

Much of the success of the pageant depends upon the incidental music. The music, as well as the dancing, should be in charge of special committees, the chairmen of which should be responsible to the pageant director for the dances and music they select and arrange. The dances may be simplified, several being omitted altogether at the discretion of the dancing director. The music, which should be in character, should be carefully rehearsed in entirety with the actors of the pantomime; the dances likewise, at least two rehearsals, to help the performers feel themselves fitted into the larger picture. Special music cues may be devised to indicate the entrance of the leading characters. Familiar music should be avoided. For example, although the dance of the maidens before the house of Mordecai is well expressed by the "Spring Song", the melody is so well known that its introduction will strike a jarring note. The chairman of the music committee is also responsible for the music played during the prologue episodes; with the aid of the dancing instructor he should be able to rehearse the Prologue, thus insuring perfect cooperation between the music and the actors at the final rehearsal.

If desirable, the Prologue can be dispensed with, or the chorus of maidens omitted and the lines of the Wizard shortened and simplified. This is best for a simple performance; but with a large stage and cast the interludes of the Prologue not only lend atmosphere to the scenes which follow, but allow the directors to reassemble their actors and prepare for the next scenes. If no Prologue of any kind is given, it is best for the director to read to the audience a brief synopsis of each scene; the market-place—Mordecai, the Jew, learns of a plot against the king, etc. A synopsis should also be printed upon the program.

It will be noted that whenever a large crowd gathers the different groups are supplied with lines. No attempt should be made to get these lines "over", but the device will be found helpful in creating the spirit of the scene. The gestures must be made big and sweeping; the action should be vigorous, but not too rapid, lest it become confusing. At the end of each episode, careful grouping will form the suggested "picture" or tableau. A spotlight will render these pictures much more effective.

Costumes, if rented, should be chosen with great care. If the pageant is presented in a large theater where groups must be distinguished at a great distance, it has been found best, whenever advisable, to use some characteristic badge—red turbans for the merchants, blue and white shawls for the Jews, etc.

Most of the properties can be manufactured by the actors themselves, but if costumes are hired, properties should be hired also for a more harmonious effect. Artificial flowers for the maidens of the Prologue and dances may be purchased from some wholesale millinery house; the torches may be wired with tiny electric bulbs; dark green straw flower-holders (for sale at Japanese stores) are better for the urns than heavy pottery, or cardboard cornucopias of the required size may be covered with green crepe paper. The white dove may be rented from a florist; but if the master of scene effects is not extremely clever in wiring it, that it can be "flown" across the stage at just the right moment, it is better not to risk the incident and drop it altogether. Still the effect is very thrilling, and worth the trouble. The dove should be wired and concealed in its cage in the bower before the curtain rises. Another dove, which can be "faked" out of cotton, can be carried by Esther in the early episode. In most communities a pony can be borrowed for Mordecai; in large cities it is easy to rent one for a nominal sum. If this is impossible, or the size of the

stage forbids live stock, the incident of Mordecai's ride can be dropped, but it is a pity, as it is the one scene the children in the audience will never forget. If the pony is used, the scene should be timed to move very slowly, and the animal (led by a very reliable pupil) should be marched across the stage several times.

CHARACTERS

AHASUERUS*King of Persia*

VASHTI*The Queen*

HAMAN*The King's Favorite*

MORDECAI*A Jew*

ESTHER*His Adopted Daughter*

BIGTHAN, TERESH*Royal Chamberlains*

MESSSENGER, FIRST BODY SERVANT, SECOND BODY SERVANT,
ROYAL SCRIBE

*People of the Market Place and Court, Jews of Shushan,
Vashti's Handmaidens, Esther's Companions, Maidens
brought before Ahasuerus, Soldiers, Scribes,
Dancers, Slaves, Jesters*

FOR PROLOGUE

A PERSIAN WIZARD, TWELVE MAIDENS

FOR EPILOGUE

AMERICA, JEWS FROM MANY LANDS

The Pageant of Esther

PROLOGUE

Twelve maidens dressed in white and purple stoles and bearing upon their heads urns filled with purple flowers enter from the L. They face L. and assume postures of expectancy.

Maidens Hail to the wizard—to the wizard, hail!

(The wizard, an old man, with his black garments covered with astrological symbols, and carrying a staff, enters L. They bow reverently before him.)

Wizard *(Raising his staff):* Hail to you, maidens of the months that pass!

(They circle about him, following his words in pantomime to music.)

Wizard *(Addressing audience):* Out of old dreaming Persia have I strayed
To tell the story of a Jewish maid—
Fair Esther, she who like a star burned bright,
And saved her people from destruction's night.

The star within the darkness!—thus behold
A symbol of the pageant we unfold,
For in Life's woof, dark mingles with the light:

Fate sends us evil days as well as bright.

(Indicating urns)

These urns both fair and gloomy hours contain,

The sun of gladness and the night of pain,
The rosy dawn which clouds in woe again.

(Takes a flower from the vase of the First Maiden and scans it earnestly.)

A lot I draw—the story groweth clear;
'Tis Persia in the springtime of the year.
No more—but to the market-place and see
The picture the first lot hath shown to me.

(Maidens drift toward L. and make a gesture of invitation.)

Maidens

Come with us to the market-place, O come!

(The wizard makes a gesture of invocation. The curtains part, showing the market-place, and he mingles with the crowd. A street. Noonday. The market folks and merchants chatter among themselves; beggars ask for alms; little children play in groups and dance a simple round dance; courtiers lounge in the outer court, their slaves fanning them.)

Merchants

(Displaying their wares as they move through the crowds): Buy my cloth—the brightest dye—buy my cloth ——

Sweetmeats—taste my sweetmeats ——

Gold anklets—gold earrings—buy a chain—
golden earrings ——

Men

Let me taste thy sweetmeats ——

Another waistcloth—nay, the deeper dye ——

A rare chain—see the heavy clasps ——

Women

This silken scarf—no, this one—thy price is
too high ——

I would buy sweetmeats for my children ——

Children We have caught Adiel—we will not let him
go ——

Imla, come play with us—Imla ——

Beggars Alms—alms—

Give me of thy charity—alms ——

Courtiers The king will soon return—stay where the
shade is pleasant;

What noise the foolish townsfolk make; they
are always chattering ——

Slaves Give me a fan that I may fan my master ——

Let me smooth the cushions of thy couch ——

Hasten with thy perfumes, for our lord is
faint from the sun ——

*(A group of Jews enter from the R. They
gather before the house of Mordecai. One
knocks at the door; Mordecai appears,
dressed like the others, but wearing upon
his breast the insignia of the house of
Benjamin.)*

Jews We have come from the synagogue ——

Where is Haddasah?

Simon will read to us ——

We will rest before thy house ——

*(They sit before the house and one reads to
them. Bigthan and Teresh come from the
palace and come to front of stage. Bigthan
shows Teresh his petition; Teresh nods and
glances over it eagerly. They station them-
selves at the gate of the outer court. Ha-
man, with a small retinue, enters from R.
People cry "Haman!" and bow before him;
he passes haughtily into outer court, where
courtiers rise and treat him with deference.
Jews before the house of Mordecai mingle*

in the crowd. Ahasuerus and Vashti enter with retinue. Cries of "The king—may the king live forever!" At the gate, Bigthan and Teresh prostrate themselves before Ahasuerus. Bigthan offers his petition, which Ahasuerus spurns and passes on; Vashti and her women enter the women's pavilion, then pass off stage, L. Ahasuerus enters court, speaks familiarly with Haman; they pass into the palace, followed by courtiers and slaves. Bigthan has thrown himself on the ground by the gate; he shows great grief and anger; Teresh tries to soothe him. Townspeople leave slowly; night begins to fall. Mordecai is seen in background with group of Jews. Finally he leaves with them, L. Teresh raises Bigthan and points with a gesture of menace to the palace. He leads Bigthan toward the house of Mordecai. As they talk, Mordecai enters from L. and crosses to his house. He is attracted by their excited gestures and creeps behind them. Teresh makes a gesture of drinking—points to the palace—takes vial from girdle—gesture of pouring contents into wine—Bigthan nods eagerly—Mordecai's face shows horror.)

PICTURE—MORDECAI AND THE CONSPIRATORS.

SCENE I—The twelve maidens, dressed as before, enter from the R. to slow music. They stand listlessly and show weariness, but raise their heads expectantly when the wizard enters from L.

Maidens Night cometh and we hunger for thy speech.
(They circle about him with their urns. He draws from the urn of the second maiden.)
Tell us, O wizard, what thy art reveals.

Wizard *(Bending above flower and speaking with suppressed excitement)—*

The chamberlains approach, their king to slay;
He's saved by Mordecai, who hastes away
Unnoticed. Vashti, Persia's beauteous queen,
The pearl of women, in her bower is seen,
The king's commandment dares to disobey;
Her royal robes and crown are snatched away,
And swift foot messengers make haste to
bring
A bride to suit the fancy of the king.

Maidens *(Eagerly, as they hurry L.):* Haste to the
palace where the feast is spread!

Wizard *(Raising his staff):* Come, night of nights, of
gladness and of woe!

(Slaves appear with torches in the outer court. He stands watching them a moment, and then crosses slowly to the R. and disappears.)

NIGHT—THE PALACE

(The music grows as the slaves bring forth tables, low stools, etc., and deck the tables for the banquet. Lights appear in women's pavilion. Vashti is shown with her maidens and court ladies. Slaves pass among them carrying wine, fruit, etc. Ahasuerus, Haman and their retinues, followed by courtiers, enter the court from the palace. They sit at the tables; slaves offer them wine, etc.; garland guests with flowers. Townspeople gather outside the gate to see the banquet. Mordecai is seen to come from his house, mingle with the townspeople, and finally enter the outer court. He endeavors to reach the king. Bigthan and Teresh approach the king. Bigthan diverts the attention of his body-servants while Teresh poisons his wine. Ahasuerus is about to drink when Mordecai throws himself before him, begs him not to drink, points to the two conspirators, who are seized by the soldiers and led away, L. In the meantime Mordecai has slipped away unrewarded in the crowd. Ahasuerus sends for his royal scribe and has the event recorded in the Chronicles. Vashti is shown making merry with her women. They sing. Vashti sings, and Ahasuerus, hearing her voice, sends his royal messenger to bring her to the banquet.)

Courtiers

We will see the queen—the pearl of women——
Vashti is the most beautiful of all queens ——
The king has sent for Vashti ——

Slaves Will not my lord taste of this wine?
Bring fresh roses for our garlands——

Women (*In the bower*)—
Surely thou wilt not appear at the banquet——
It is not meet for the queen to be seen there—
The messenger will say thou wilt not come——

People (*In the street*)—
The king hath sent a messenger for Vashti——
Will the great queen appear at the banquet?

(The messenger kneels before Vashti, who makes an indignant gesture of refusal. He returns fearfully to the king. Ahasuerus rises in his anger. The courtiers seek to calm him. Vashti and her women wait in tense fear. Ahasuerus bids the messenger return to Vashti and take from her the crown and royal cloak. He calls for his scribes; they sit before him waiting for the message. Messenger returns with crown and royal raiment; Vashti is shown weeping among her handmaidens; her women creep off in terror. Ahasuerus points to crown and robe, bids the scribes take his message, calls for his messengers. They bow before him; he bids the scribes deliver their message to the messengers, points to crown and robe, and orders to seek a new queen. The townspeople return to their homes, R. The courtiers follow Ahasuerus and retire into palace; slaves remove tables, etc. Morning breaks. Vashti and her weeping handmaidens leave the palace.)

PICTURE—VASHTI IS DRIVEN INTO EXILE.

SCENE II—The maidens dressed in white and rose, with rose garlands hanging from their urns, dance lightly in L. to a happy melody.

Maidens The morning breaks and all the world is fair.
(Wizard enters R. They shower him with roses, laughing in their joy. He silences them with an abrupt gesture, and they crowd about him curiously.)

Wizard Cease with your roses—I would speak of one,
Whom men the Myrtle call—the rising sun
Beholds her young companions fresh and gay,
Who dance to usher in the fragrant day.
(Takes rose from urn of third maiden; speaks doubtfully)—

A day which breaks in joy to close in woe:
Hadassah from her girlhood's home must go.

Maidens *(Breaking into joyous laughter as he shakes his head mournfully)—*

Nay, we will laugh—we're young—and it is
spring!

(They dance off R.; the music grows stronger.)

Wizard *(Wistfully):* The sun is rising and the maid-
ens dance. *(He goes off L., very old and tired.)*

(Before the house of Mordecai. As the sun rises, young girls in white and carrying pink flowers dance forth, R. and L. They express in pantomimic dance their joy in the beauty of the spring morning. They sit and weave garlands before the house of

Mordecai, while one girl dances before them. The girls resume their dance and toss their flowers to each other. During the dance Mordecai comes from his house and sits on the doorstep reading a scroll. Esther comes from the house, steals up behind him, blindfolds his eyes. She sits at his feet, teases him, will not let him read, etc. Girls observe Esther, pause a moment in their dance, drag her from Mordecai, playfully bind her with their chains, dance about her, finally release her and crown her their queen with flowers. While they frolic about her, Jews come in (R.) and tell Mordecai of the search for a queen. He summons Esther, bids her enter the house; she obeys reluctantly. Messenger enters (R.) and demands to see Esther; Mordecai leads her from the house.—She clings to him and weeps when the messenger makes known his purpose. Mordecai blesses her. The messenger bids her choose her companions to go with her to the king; they hasten to her and beg to be allowed to go; she chooses seven and bids the others farewell.)

PICTURE—ESTHER PARTING FROM MORDECAI.

SCENE III—Maidens, their arms entwined, frolic in from the R. They wear blue stoles over their white draperies and corn flowers fall from their urns.

Maidens 'Tis noonday—let us frolic in the shade.
(They playfully bind the fourth maiden with their garlands of flowers.)

Wizard *(Entering and speaking angrily)—*
Ah, thoughtless ones, so ye would laugh and sport,
While youthful Esther hastens to the court.
(Approaches fourth maiden and picks flower from urn at her feet.)
Who knows what sorrows or what joys await
The maiden just beyond the royal gate?
(Scans flower)

She meets the king; unknowing, goes her way—
Yet much depends on this eventful day.

Maidens *(As they release fourth maiden and break into laughter):* Hark to the music—all the world's at play! *(Then run off R. Wizard stands looking after them. Again he scans the flower.)*

Wizard They meet—they look—and all the world is changed.

(He goes slowly after the maidens, R. In the outer court. Noonday. The music grows louder. Youths of the royal household bound from the palace to play at ball in the court. Ahasuerus and his two body-

servants come from the palace. Ahasuerus watches the boys a moment. Gives to one attendant his jewels and crown, to the other his heavy outer robe, and, dressed in his simple tunic, joins the boys in their game. Several courtiers enter from the palace, dressed for hunting. Ahasuerus dismisses his body-servants; they go into the palace and return immediately carrying a short dark cloak and a bow and arrow. He dismisses the boys who troop into the palace. Ahasuerus sets out for the hunt with his courtiers. Halfway across the stage the courtiers point R., crying, "A dove—a dove—shoot!" Ahasuerus fits an arrow in his bow and shoots. Esther, with her companions, led by the messenger, enters R., holding the wounded dove to her breast. The king approaches her. The messenger is about to kneel and pay him homage, but Ahasuerus signs for him to be silent. He asks for the dove. Esther shows that it is wounded, and begs to keep it. He asks in return a spray of the myrtle garland about her head. Esther, her maidens and the messenger pass into the outer court. Ahasuerus orders his courtiers to leave him. They go off R.)

PICTURE—AHASUERUS STANDS GAZING AFTER ESTHER, WHO LINGERS AT THE PALACE DOOR, HER FACE TURNED TOWARD HIM.

SCENE IV—Maidens in pure white with scarlet roses about their heads and in their urns enter from the L. and raise their arms to the sunset.

Maidens 'Tis sunset and the sky is like a rose.

(Wizard enters, and they offer him flowers, swaying to the music as they pass before him.)

Wizard (Takes rose from urn of fifth maiden and peers at it thoughtfully)—

And Esther's future bloometh as a rose.

For this fair flower's petals now disclose

A Jewish virgin at the king's right hand—

Tonight he makes her queen of all this land.

(The maidens drift R. and beckon him to follow them. He shakes his head and passes off L., very slowly, the flower still in his hand.)

(The women's pavilion and the outer court of the palace. Sunset. Slaves and tire-women enter women's pavilion from L. In the pavilion are gathered the maidens who are to appear before the king. The music grows stronger and the girls sing softly as they bring the jewels, etc. Esther stands apart. Her seven maidens bring her robes, a circlet of jewels, etc. They hold a mirror before her and deck her and crown her. She hesitates, lays aside the rich robe and resumes her crown of myrtle. Sound of acclamation. Cries of "The king!" "May the king live forever!" etc. Ahasuerus, Haman and retinues come from palace. Ahasuerus

*on throne; courtiers grouped about him.
Buzz of talk.)*

Courtiers 'The king will choose a queen to succeed
 Vashti ——

Who will be the new queen?

The fairest maiden in the kingdom will be his
 queen ——

*(Townspeople, among them Mordecai, who
leaves his house slowly and sadly, crowd
about the gate of the outer court.)*

Townsfolk Crowd not—for I would see the maidens when
 they come ——

They will come dressed in rich robes ——

They will wear the jewels of a queen ——

'Tis my place—I would stand here when they
 pass—give over ——

*(The king sends messengers and slaves to wo-
men's pavilion. Maidens are brought be-
fore him. They come before his throne one
by one and he signs for them to pass on.
Esther, who has timidly followed, comes last.
He bids her wait. Comes down from the
throne. She stares at him in doubt and
presses her hands to her forehead as though
bewildered. Mordecai comes forward, show-
ing suspense. Ahasuerus takes sprig of
myrtle from his girdle and shows her that
it has been taken from her garland. She
recognizes him—bows before him. He raises
her and leads her to the steps of the throne.)*

PICTURE—THE CROWNING OF ESTHER, THE
COURT BOWING BEFORE HER, WHILE MORDE-
CAI STANDS BEFORE HIS OWN HOUSE WEEPING
IN THE MOONLIGHT.

SCENE V—Music is played slowly and softly, and the maidens enter before curtain dressed in white and gray, their urns filled with ivy. They move languidly.

Maidens Gray evening and the world is very still.
(Wizard enters slowly, L. They circle about him, offering their urns. He takes a leaf from the urn of the sixth maiden.)

Wizard And as the evening shadows cross the sky,
So danger hovers over Mordecai.
He will not bow to Haman who, in hate,
Vows that each hapless Jew will share his
fate:

He pleads for their destruction with the king,
Who gives to Haman e'en his chain and ring;
The Jews are doomed with noble Mordecai,
And Haman draws a day on which they die.

Maidens Gray as the evening is the tale we hear.
(They go off L. slowly, their urns upon their heads.)

Wizard Strange is the lot the urn of fate doth hold.
(Exits R.)

(Before the palace. Nightfall. Esther, in royal robes, passes with her maidens from the palace through the pavilion and off the scene, L. Mordecai is waiting at the gate. As they pass he stretches his hands toward Esther, then covers his face with his robe lest she recognize him. Left alone, he takes a small scroll from his girdle and sits reading in the light of one of the lamps. Haman and his retinue, as well as a number of courtiers, cross from R. Comic interlude

furnished by pranks of several of Haman's slaves who play tricks upon a pompous courtier. Haman approaches outer court. Mordecai glances up from scroll; continues reading. Townsfolk pass at intervals and all bow before Haman. Haman observes Mordecai and orders him to do the same. Mordecai shakes his head, points upward, showing that he will show homage to God alone, and starts to cross to his house, R. Haman shows violent anger and threatens him. Group of Jews pass from L. and cross stage, congregating before the house of Mordecai. Courtiers point to them and Haman, with a threatening gesture, plans revenge. Ahasuerus enters from palace and sits on throne. Temple servants burn incense. Haman approaches with his retinue, kneels, points to tripods and burning incense, then to group of Jews before the house of Mordecai who will not bow before the Persian gods. Points to Persian soldiers, then to Jews, whom he desires to have destroyed. Takes off jewels—offers them to Ahasuerus for a bribe; Ahasuerus refuses jewels, shows Haman to soldiers as their leader—gives Haman his own signet ring and the gold chain about his neck as symbol of his new authority. Points to Jews, who are departing across stage L. and shrugs shoulders. Retires into palace with his court. Haman and his friends group themselves at outer gates. They select two urns and begin to draw lots.)

PICTURE—THE DRAWING OF LOTS.

SCENE VI—The music is played softly. The maidens enter from L., lavender flowers in their urns, lavender stoles over their white draperies. They move slowly and droop their heads.

Maidens The night is long—we seek in vain for sleep.
(They sink to the ground and assume listless attitudes. The wizard enters from R. The seventh maiden kneels before him and spreads the contents of her urn at his feet.)

Maidens *(Without stirring):* Yea, speed the hours
 with thy wizard's art.

Wizard *(Picking up a flower and looking at it long before he speaks)—*

The king is weary, too, and seeks for sleep;
Before his heavy eyes the hours creep;
Dancer and clown strive hard their lord to
 please,
But neither mirth nor music bring him ease;
They read the Chronicles—he hears again
The story of the wine cup—learns with pain
How Mordecai doth unrewarded go;
He sends for Haman—'tis a bitter blow
When Haman learns that Mordecai will ride
Upon the king's horse, Haman at his side,
To cry until the city streets will ring:
"This is the man much honored by the king."
While, left alone, the king laments the fate
That offers Mordecai to Haman's hate.

Maidens *(Raising their urns as seventh maiden picks up her flowers):* May sleep rest on thine
 eyes as soft as dew. *(They go out softly, R., their faces bent low over their urns.)*

Wizard

(Musing, with face uplifted): The stars are very solemn as they move. *(Goes out L., lost in thought.)*

(Before the palace—late at night. Palace servants enter with torches. King dressed in long, loose robe, enters. Lies upon couch in center of court. Shows restlessness while slaves fan him. Several slaves dance before him—he is still unsatisfied—a slave girl sings—he rewards her with a jewel and sends her away—his favorite jesters try to amuse him—Ahasuerus drives them from his sight—sends a messenger to bring Haman from the palace. While waiting, he bids his royal scribe to read from the Chronicles. Slaves carrying several large scrolls enter—first and second scribes read to the king, telling their stories with vivid gestures—king, uninterested, dismisses them—royal scribe reads story of the treachery of chamberlains—he shows interest—scribe rises, points to house of Mordecai—king points to his jewels, then to house of Mordecai—scribe shakes his head, for Mordecai has not been rewarded. Haman enters from palace, following messenger. Scribe, in obedience to king's gesture, places scroll on couch and retires. Haman bows before king, who asks him how best to honor the man he loves with all his heart. Haman turns to messenger and points to himself with much satisfaction, while Ahasuerus glances over Chronicle. Haman turns back to Ahasuerus and indicates that such a man should be led through the streets crowned with the king's crown and wearing royal robes. To his in-

tense chagrin Ahasuerus points to Chronicle—recalls the story of the poisoned wine cup—points to house of Mordecai who is to be honored. Haman pleads with king to revoke his command—courtiers exchange glances of amusement and laugh among themselves—king shakes his head—Mordecai must be honored—Haman still pleads—king dismisses him—Haman and court pass slowly into palace, Haman last—shows great anger and dismay. Servants take away all the lamps except one near the king's couch—retire into palace. Left alone, king goes to gate and stands looking toward the house of Mordecai, in which a light still twinkles. His face grows sad as he thinks of his decree.)

PICTURE—AHASUERUS LIES ON THE COUCH
READING THE CHRONICLE AND MOURNING
OVER THE DOOM OF MORDECAI.

SCENE VII—[*May be omitted.*] *The maidens, dressed as in Scene I, come in joyously.*

Maidens (*Elated*): Sound cymbals—Mordecai rides like a king. (*They cry aloud in triumph; Wizard enters from R. and holds up his staff for silence.*)

Wizard Do not rejoice—who knows what evil hours
May fall before the fading of your flowers?
(*Takes flower from urn of eighth maiden.*)
'Tis true that Mordecai rides like a king,
But list what sorrows the same day will bring;
For now the king's own herald doth proclaim
The Jews are given o'er to death and shame;
In sackcloth they approach good Mordecai—
Bid him to plead with Esther lest they die.

Maidens (*Wilfully, as festive music grows louder*)—
Mourn if thou wilt—we'll laugh our youth
away. (*They run off R. laughing.*)

Wizard (*Looking after them gloomily*): Death's heavy
wings are blotting out the sun. (*Exit L.*).
(*The street—noonday. The conversation and
action of the townspeople in Scene I are
duplicated. A group of Jews before the
house of Mordecai showing great elation.*)

Jews He will be exalted in the sight of the people ——
Mordecai will ride like a king ——
No one will be higher than Mordecai ——
The king hath shown great honor unto Mordecai ——

Townspeople (*After Jews have joined them*)—

Such a thing was never heard before——

Mordecai the Jew is honored——

We will wait in the streets and see Mordecai
as he passes——

Great are the favors the king hath heaped on
Mordecai——.

(*Some point to the L. Cries of "Behold—
Mordecai—Mordecai!" Haman, black with
rage, enters from L. He is followed by
several royal servants and leads a white
horse with rich trappings. Mordecai, dressed
in the king's robes and with the royal
crown upon his head, rides the horse. Re-
newed cries of, "Honor be to Mordecai; he
is honored by the king." People surge
about them—Haman shows anger—Morde-
cai remains unmoved. They pass off R.
Royal messenger enters L., blows his trum-
pet, commands silence, shows the king's
scroll, points to Jews who are to be slain—
exits R. Jews leave R., wailing and mourn-
ing, followed by the jeering townspeople.
Mordecai, now clad in his own simple gar-
ments, comes from the palace—Haman fol-
lows him, jeering and mocking—he is thrust
from the gate by Haman's servants—they
return from street and follow Haman into
palace—Mordecai walks slowly to his home
—is met by Jews from R., who now wear
sackcloth. They lament and tell of the king's
decree—he takes a sackcloth from one of
them, puts it on, scatters dust upon his
head, joins their lamentations. Esther en-
ters from R. into women's bower, followed*

by her maids. Jews bid Mordecai rise from ground where he has thrown himself weeping—tell him to plead with Esther—he is doubtful—they continue to plead with him. Mother shows him her child who will be slain with the rest. He swears to do his best to save them—Jews go off lamenting. Mordecai follows them slowly.)

PICTURE—MORDECAI MOURNS AT THE GATE.

SCENE VIII—Maidens appear R. before the curtain to solemn music. They wear black stoles and scarfs over their heads—white flowers in their urns.

Maidens Our hearts are bitter with the tears we shed.
 (They lean with their faces against the curtain, mourning, their urns at their feet.)

Wizard *(Entering from L. and glancing at them sadly)—*

Yea, mourn, O maidens, for the day is nigh
When every Jew within the realm must die—

(They turn toward him with pitiful gestures)
Ye do right well to veil your heads in woe—
 (They bow their heads, their scarfs covering them like great wings)

But look—ye carry blossoms white as snow.

(They do not heed him, but continue to mourn; he takes a flower from urn of the ninth maiden.)

Yet she, the lily of the chosen race,
Shall plead before the king to give them grace;
And from her bower her white dove she'll free*
If he will gracious to her people be;
"And if I perish"—says with courage high—
"I perish"—and goes bravely forth to die.

Maidens *(Wearily, as they lift their urns):* Our eyes
 are dim—our feet are slack as death.
 (They pass out L. mournfully, with drooping heads.)

* This and following line may be omitted.

Wizard

(*Rapt*): Perhaps a star may pierce the inky gloom. (*Exit R. with forehead pressed to the flower.*)

(*Before the palace and in the women's pavilion—sunset. Esther and her maidens in the bower make merry with music. Mordecai is seen mourning at the gate. One of Esther's handmaidens comes from the palace, crosses court, sees Mordecai, runs to Esther, tells her of his strange appearance. Esther sends three maidens to him with rich robes—waits expectantly—he refuses robes—follows girls into Esther's presence. Several Jews in sackcloth are seen wailing and mourning before the house of Mordecai. Esther asks Mordecai to explain his strange garb—he dismisses her handmaidens, who retire into the background—tells her of the king's decree—shows her copy of royal command he takes from his girdle—leads her into the street and shows her Jews mourning at his doorstep. She shrinks back, afraid—he pleads with her to go to the king—even before the throne—she refuses, weeping—he grows angry—is about to leave her—she consents to go before the king. He calls back the handmaidens—orders them to deck Esther in her jewels and richest robes—she rejects all they show her—must have her fairest garments—picks up a black scarf—tells Mordecai that she will wave it as a signal if her request is not granted—shows him the dove which she has kept caged in her bower—if Jews are spared she will liberate the bird.* Mordecai*

* This incident may be omitted.

blesses her and leaves her, going slowly to his house, while she stands looking after him—joins other Jews—they enter house together. Maidens bring forth Esther's royal robes and crown and hold a mirror before her. They deck her while she weeps.)

PICTURE—ESTHER, IN HER ROYAL ROBES, SETS OUT TO SEEK THE KING.

SCENE IX—*The music is heard, wailing, and the maidens hurry in L. and cling together in attitudes of fear. They are dressed in white and purple.*

Maidens (*Casting aside their urns*): Even our sweetest flowers smell of death. (*They stand huddled together in frightened groups of threes.*)

Wizard (*Entering from R. and approaching tenth maiden*)—

Nay, let me read the secrets of thine urn.

(*She points to it shudderingly; he takes a flower from urn.*)

In the dim west the sun's red ashes burn—

Now Esther seeks the king with faltering breath;

Unless she holds his scepter, she tastes death.

(*Maidens listen tensely.*)

Ah, now the king is gracious—saved is she—

He grants her boon, whatever it may be—

(*Vaguely and troubled.*)

She bids the king and Haman come that night

Unto her banquet—(*gropingly*)—all else fades

from sight. (*He passes off L., still looking at the flower, his eyes strained, his manner expectant.*)

Maidens (*Doubtfully*): The future lies enwrapt in purple mist. (*They pass off R. slowly, peering into their urns.*)

(*In the court—still sunset. Jews shown lamenting before the house of Mordecai.*)

Esther lingers before her pavilion weeping and praying among her maidens. Ahasuerus and retinue enter court—mounts throne—an attendant stands at either hand, sword drawn and watchful. Courtiers group themselves before him. Haman appears before the king, bows low, and orders two of his negro slaves to bring forward a large chest; when opened it appears to be filled with flowers; suddenly a slave girl carrying a flower in her hand rises from the chest—the other dancers seize the blossoms and toss them among the guests while the girl dances. Esther is seen to leave her pavilion during the dance; her handmaidens cling to her, but she bids them to remain behind—two follow her unnoticed—as she reaches the entrance of the outer court she orders them to remain behind—they kneel and plead to go with her—she embraces them, and the three women enter the court—no one observes them until the end of the dance, then there is a cry of “The Queen”! All draw back in terror—Esther signs her two handmaidens to remain with the others—the two body servants lean forward tensely. Esther advances slowly to the foot of the throne, trembles violently, forces herself to look up at the king—after a moment’s hesitation he extends his scepter—she sinks on her knees on the steps of the throne and touches scepter—guards relax—handmaidens clasp each other’s hands and weep. Esther points to pavilion where the banquet is spread—invites king and Haman. Ahasuerus accepts the invitation and raises her to his side—

Haman, glowing with pride at this new honor, goes to his chief friends and shows his delight—kisses Esther's hands and thanks her—signs to dancers to resume their dance.)

PICTURE—OUTSIDE IN THE GROWING TWILIGHT THE JEWS STILL FAST AND PRAY, WHILE IN THE PALACE THE DANCERS SHOWER ESTHER WITH FLOWERS AND WAIT TO RESUME THEIR DANCE.

SCENE X—Maidens dressed in white and scarlet, with scarlet roses in their urns, dance in joyously, L.

Maidens The night is sweet with perfume and with song.

Wizard *(Entering from R. and approaching angrily):*
Yea, sing and frolic ere it be too late—
Who knoweth of the next decree of fate?

(Snatches rose from urn of eleventh maiden, studies it, and then speaks with sudden rapture)—

Ay, maidens, let your joyous voices ring
In happy anthems, for the gracious king
Is pleasant unto Esther, spares the Jews,
But mercy unto Haman doth refuse—
Upon the very gallows doth he die
Which he himself hath built for Mordecai,
While Mordecai is honored by the king,
Receives the royal chain and signet ring;
The dove is freed; the waiting mourners know*
That God gave ear unto His people's woe.

Maidens *(Joyfully):* God saved His people through
a weak girl's prayer. *(They run out R. rejoicing.)*

Wizard The ways of God are very hard to read. *(He goes out L.)*

(Women's pavilion—nightfall. Esther waits with her maidens, who add last touches to banquet. Royal servants carrying torches come from palace. In the outer court they dance, then stand, making a lane of light through which king, Haman and a small retinue pass as they go to the pavilion.)

* If desired, these last two lines may be omitted.

Esther bids the king send his servants away; Haman likewise—she and her maidens will serve them—all are dismissed except the two body-servants behind the king's couch. Later they enter the palace. Several maidens play stringed instruments—banquet is begun—king, pleased at his reception, offers Esther gifts—chain from his neck—ring from his finger—laughingly points to his crown. Esther shakes her head and rises to her feet—she will have none of these—only the ring from Haman's finger, the royal chain from Haman's neck—Ahasuerus shakes his head in perplexity at her strange request—Haman tries to laugh, but fails—Esther kneels beside the king's couch—shows him scroll Mordecai has given her—points to house of Mordecai where Jews wait without, mourning their doom—points to herself—offers to lay aside her royal robes and follow them—if they die, she, a Jewess, must die also. Ahasuerus rises doubtfully. She turns to Haman. Haman crouches in his chair as Esther denounces him—Ahasuerus shows great anger—turns upon him—Haman throws himself before Esther—pleads with her to save him from the king's wrath—Esther shrinks back—Ahasuerus orders his body-servants to seize Haman—they take his chain and ring from him and give them to the king. He commands them to lead Haman to his death—Haman led off L. Esther, much to king's astonishment, liberates her dove—Jews seen to rejoice as it*

* This incident may be omitted.

flies over them. Jews urge Mordecai to go to the palace—Esther explains why she set the dove free—Mordecai appears before them—Esther tells king Mordecai saved him from the poisoned wine cup and is her uncle—Ahasuerus gives ring and chain to Mordecai—gives him decree for Jews' destruction, which he destroys. Esther about to prostrate herself before king—Mordecai bids her thank the God of the Jews, who has saved them.)

P|CTURE—THE KING HAS RETIRED. THE HAND-MAIDENS ARE IN THE BACKGROUND. ESTHER IN HER ROYAL ROBES SITS LIKE A CHILD AT MORDECAI'S FEET, WHILE MORDECAI, HAMAN'S CLOAK ABOUT HIS SHOULDERS, FONDLY STROKES HER HAIR AS HE DICTATES TO A SCRIBE BEFORE HIM A DECREE TO SAVE THE JEWS.

SCENE XI—The maidens dressed in scarlet and gold—their vases filled with yellow flowers—dance in from L. to bright music.

Maidens (*Dancing*): Within the streets the Jews hold festival!

 (*Wizard enters from R. They dance about him impishly. He playfully threatens them with his staff.*)

Wizard Ah, laugh in glee, the memory of this day
Throughout the centuries will not fade away!
 (*Takes flower from twelfth urn, reads it, and continues exultingly*):

For after long, forgetful years have rolled,
Still will this day made brave in red and gold,
Be issued in with festival and mirth
In every corner of the peopled earth;
And every Jew will raise his voice on high
In praise of God, who would not let him die.

Maidens To Esther give we praises flower-sweet —
 (*They dance off R., scattering their flowers as they go.*)

Wizard (*Reverently*): Praise be to Him who helped
 her to be strong. (*He goes off L.*)
 (*A street—noon. Great hubbub among people. Gayly dressed, they stream in from every side. Plenty of noise with cymbals, etc.*)

Townsfolk The Jews are rejoicing—we will rejoice with
 them —

The Jews are spared—they have grown mighty
in the land ——

Let us rejoice with the Jews ——

*(Jews, bearing gifts, flowers, cymbals, etc.,
come from R. in a joyous procession. Crowd
about the house of Mordecai—some enter—
come out and report it empty.)*

Jews

We are saved—let us be merry—we are saved—
We are to live, not die—we are saved ——
The Lord was on our side—we are saved ——

*(Much merry-making among people—throw-
ing of confetti—giving of alms to beggars—
exchanging of gifts, etc. Ahasuerus and
Esther with their retinues come from palace,
followed by Mordecai, who wears his Jew-
ish garments but displays the gold chain
and circlet of Haman and carries Haman's
staff. Loud acclamations.)*

Townspeople

Hail to the king—may he live forever ——
Hail to Esther—hail to our queen—hail to
Esther ——
Hail to Mordecai—he will rule over us—hail
to Mordecai ——

Jews

Thanks to the king who has spared us ——
Thanks be to Esther who pleaded for us ——
Thanks be to Mordecai—all praise to Morde-
cai ——
All praise to Esther ——

*(People rush to Esther with gifts; others
bring her their children to bless, etc. She
shakes her head, pointing upward, bidding
them praise God—not her.)*

(A hush falls upon the people. Jewish maidens carrying palms dance a solemn dance before them. At the conclusion the Jews burst into song of rejoicing, extending their hands in gratitude to Esther as they sing.)

PICTURE—ESTHER AND MORDECAI RECEIVE THE PRAISES OF THE JEWS.

EPILOGUE

[This episode may be omitted.] The wizard and maidens, dressed in simple white with crowns of laurel on their heads, enter slowly from L. before the curtain. The maidens stand facing the west—the wizard speaks, addressing the audience.

Wizard The rolling years have passed, and now we
 stand
 Upon the threshold of a Motherland,
 A Mother, she, to take us to her breast—
 America—the Esther of the West—
 To her come the oppressed of every land,
 Their star, the torch of freedom in her hand—
 No longer need her weary children roam—
 America, to each Jew, grants a home.

Maidens We praise thee, Esther—Star of those who
 weep!

(The Wizard raises his wand. The curtains draw back slowly, disclosing the Goddess of Liberty, white and impassive, her torch in her uplifted hand. On her right are grouped the Jews of the past, on her L., a group of refugees from other countries, kneeling before her with outstretched hands and imploring aid. The Maidens and the Wizard join in the song of praise to "America".)

THE SILVER CUP

A PASSOVER FOLK PLAY

In One Act

NOTES TO THE PRODUCER

This little play, although slight, requires careful handling, and should not be entrusted to inexperienced actors, especially in the case of the old man. There must be no suggestion of artifice; the producer must try from the first rehearsal to give the illusive quality of the legend and fairy-tale.

The text gives full directions for the setting and properties, which, while realistic, must never become obtrusively so.

The costume of every one but the old man should be modeled upon the dress of the French or German peasant of today. The old man should be represented by a boy somewhat taller than the other characters, wearing a white wig and beard and a rough brown cloak with a hood. There should be a hemp girdle around the waist and he should carry a staff.

CHARACTERS

JACOB *A Woodcutter*
HANNAH *His Wife*
BENJAMIN *Their Child*
MARK *A Neighbor*
AN OLD MAN.

TIME—About a hundred years ago.

PLACE—In a deep forest.

The Silver Cup

It is late afternoon on a spring day, the afternoon of Passover eve. The scene shows a little hut, clean and cheery, but scantily furnished; a few chairs, a rude settle under the low window, a table and a cupboard, all plainly made by the master of the house. Upon a shelf above the brick fireplace are two brass candlesticks; between them, contrasting strongly with the mean furnishings of the room, a huge silver cup. On the settle lies a child about six years old; he is pale and thin, but he laughs as heartily and as cheerfully as other boys and girls who can run about. At the door stands his mother, peering out anxiously into the gathering twilight.

Benjamin: Don't you see father coming yet, mother?

Hannah: No, child. And it is so late, too! If he doesn't get here soon, I'll have no time to prepare the Seder before Passover begins.

Benjamin: He should have gone to town last week before the river was high and the roads were so bad from the rains.

Hannah: But he had no money to buy wine and matzos until the Master paid him for his last load of wood.

(A short silence.)

Benjamin: When you have the door open I can hear the river roaring.

Hannah: You know it is always high in the spring when the snow melts and the torrents rush down from the mountains. If the bridge should be swept away ——

Benjamin: Do you remember last year—before I got sick—how I used to go down to the river and gather the wood it tossed on the shore—and sail my boats? (*Confidently.*) But I'll be well soon, won't I, mother, and then I can walk again and go down to play by the river?

Hannah (*hastily*): Yes, dear one. (*She closes the door.*) It is growing too damp for you. (*She goes to the cupboard and brings out a pitcher of milk and a bowl and spoon, which she places upon the table.*) You will be too hungry if you wait until father comes and brings us something for the Seder.

Benjamin: Mother, neighbor Mark says that the Master has fine wheaten bread on his table—and meat almost every day—even when it isn't a Shabbos or a Yomtov! Why don't we have good things to eat and drink and a big house like his instead of one little room, mother?

Hannah: Because we are poor and he is very rich.

Benjamin: But we're rich, too! Haven't we the biggest silver Seder cup in the world?

Hannah (*giving him bowl of milk and propping him up on his pillow*): Yes, even our rich lord upon the hill has nothing so beautiful in his fine house. (*She takes the cup down from the shelf and places it upon the table, then takes down the candle-sticks.*) I will polish it now, and the candle-sticks, also, and then I will set the table, for, perhaps, your father will come soon, and then all things must be ready for the Seder.

(*There is a gentle knock at the door; the mother opens it and stands perplexed, staring at a strange man in the doorway. Truly, he is unlike any of their peasant friends or the servants of the rich landowner she has seen pass on their way to town on market day. He is old, with a long,*

white beard, yet straight and vigorous. He wears a rough brown cloak with a knotted cord about the waist, and carries a heavy staff.)

Stranger: Peace be upon all within this house!

Hannah (*faltering a little*): And peace be upon you, O stranger!

Stranger: May I come in and rest awhile? I have traveled many miles today and I am weary.

Hannah (*holding the door wide open*): Come and rest. (*She shudders a little.*) Hear the river! The bridge will surely be swept away—and my husband——

Stranger: He will return safely—and that which he has gone to fetch will be restored to him.

Hannah (*puzzled*): How did you know that he had gone to town to buy what is needful for the Passover?

Stranger (*with a soft smile*): Going up and down the world, I listen to the birds—and they tell me many secrets. (*Goes to settle where the child sits, spoon in air, staring at him curiously.*) Peace be upon you, little one. (*Noticing milk.*) I have fasted all day. (*Turns to mother.*) Will you not give me some milk also, that I, too, may eat and be satisfied?

Hannah (*in shame*): I gave the last drop to the child. But if you will wait (*throwing her shawl about her shoulders*), I will run to our neighbor Mark, who lives near the river, and borrow a cupful from his good wife. If it were not for her kindness the child would often be hungry, for this winter has been a hard one, and we were obliged to sell our two goats.

Benjamin: —— and mother's fine gold earrings she wore upon her wedding day.

Stranger: But not the beautiful silver cup I see upon your table. (*He picks it up and turns it over curiously.*) A king might be pleased to drink from this; it would bring you many gold pieces were your husband to take it to town upon a market day.

Hannah: But I dare not sell it. (*Goes to door with pitcher in hand.*) If you will stay with the child while I am gone—— (*opens door, but shrinks back.*) Hear how the river is crying out in the dusk—the bridge will surely be swept away before he returns.

Benjamin: Don't go, mother, if you are afraid. Why can't the poor old man have some of my milk? I'm not so very hungry. (*He holds out the bowl of milk to the old man who sits upon the foot of the settle.*)

Stranger: I would rather share your supper, little son, than sit at the table of your rich landlord on the hill. Ah, what large grounds he has—and fair orchards. In summer they must be a rare temptation to a lively boy like you.

Benjamin (*a little wistfully*): Last summer I used to climb the hill, and when the keeper was kind he would give me rosy apples for mother—and once he filled my hands with cherries. But I have been sick for such a long time I can't walk—not a single step. Though next summer I'll be well enough to go up the hill again and sail my boats on the river, won't I, mother?

Hannah (*her voice breaking a little*): I hope so, little one.

Stranger: Have you not heard of the great physician at Rheims? But yesterday I saw a little child who had been afflicted even as your child is now; yet the physician healed him. Take your boy to him——

Hannah (*at the table polishing candle-sticks*): We are poor folk ——

Stranger: He is good to the poor.

Hannah: I have heard that he heals the rich and poor alike —may God reward him for it. But we have no money to make the journey—to live on the way.

Stranger: You have saved nothing?

Hannah: We have sold our last possessions that we should not starve during this hard winter; as the child told you, even the gold earrings I wore upon my wedding day.

Stranger: But the silver cup that you are polishing —— (*Goes to table and examines cup carefully.*) I am something of a trader, and I know the value of ancient silver pieces. As I thought (*pointing out the carving*), carvings of the flight from Egypt—the destruction of Pharaoh's army on the banks of the Red Sea—all the work of a great artist. I will buy this cup from you.

Hannah: I cannot sell it. (*Takes it from him and continues polishing.*)

Stranger (*takes a purse from his girdle which he empties upon the table*): See—all these gold pieces—even half of them would enable you to make the journey to Rheims and take your child to the great physician who will make him strong and well again.

Benjamin: O mother—mother—sell him the cup. I want to be well and strong—I want to run about and play and sail my boats on the river.

Hannah: I cannot sell this cup. I would do anything else for him—sell my very life blood—but this cup I cannot sell—not for all the gold in the world!

Stranger: But why?

Hannah: It is not mine to sell. Seven years ago on a spring night like this, after I had come to this house as a bride, there was a knock at the door, and when my husband went to open it a voice from the darkness asked to see me.

Stranger: Who was your late wedding guest?

Hannah: I could not see his face. He would not enter. But out of the darkness the voice spoke to me: "O bride, today have you tasted the wine of the marriage cup—you have shared it with your husband just as you will share the hardships and the joys of your common life. And at first the hardships shall be many and the joys few." (*She breaks off suddenly.*) And it has been so, even to this day, for we have known poverty and hardship, and now the illness of our child.

Benjamin (*eagerly*): But, mother, tell him what else the voice at the door said to you.

Hannah (*laughingly*): He has heard the story so often that he knows it almost better than I do. Well, he who spoke at the door continued: "But you must always hope for a deliverance from your sorrows. No matter how poor and needy you are during the year, still you will always have matzos and wine for your Passover feast; no matter how scant your cheer, there will always be the rich silver cup to hold the wine for Elijah to sip when he stops at your Seder table."

Stranger: And the stranger gave you this cup?

Hannah: Yes; a hand reached for mine in the darkness and thrust something into my hand. And the voice said: "I leave this cup as a pledge of better fortune; use it every Passover; guard it well. For it is yours only to hold in trust, and in seven years I will come for it again."

Stranger (*nodding*): Seven years.

Hannah: And the words of him who spoke in the darkness have come true. We have had hardships and poverty, and, bitterest of all, the sickness of our only child. Many times have we been tempted to sell this cup, for though we are only simple folk and know little of the great world, we were sure that it would bring us a goodly sum. But it is not ours to sell, for some day the stranger who came to us in the night will come to claim his own again.

Stranger: But you say it was seven years ago—and he has not come. (*He fingers the gold.*) Surely he could not blame you for thinking he has forgotten his contract. Now the cup is yours to sell, and with the gold you will take your child to Rheims and he will become strong and hearty again.

Benjamin: Mother, please, please sell the cup!

Hannah: What though the seven years have passed? I will wait a little longer—as long as the stranger's promise holds. (*Sweeping gold into purse, and giving it back to him.*) As long as we have our matzos and wine for the Passover, then I will know that I must still keep the cup and that he will return to our house.

(*The door is flung open and the father staggers in; he flings his dripping cloak on the floor and swings into a chair as though exhausted.*)

Hannah (*running to him*): What has happened? Was the bridge swept away?

(*The old man, his purse still in his hand, stands in the background watching them, a gentle smile playing about his mouth.*)

Jacob (*speaking hoarsely*): No; it is still tottering and swaying like a leaf in the wind. But the river is growing higher and higher. I clung to the rails and crawled across—but when I was half over——

Hannah: Yes—what happened?

Jacob: —— a great wave swept over me and flung me to the shore. And when I was able to stand and look about me, I found that my basket——

Hannah: The basket with the provisions for our Passover?

Jacob: —— the basket with the matzos and the wine, for which I had spent my last penny had been swept into the river. After my long journey—our last penny spent—and now we cannot have our Passover!

Hannah (*in sudden anger*): Ah, this is too much—all we have suffered in this year—and the child's illness—to have his promise fail us now—not even matzos and wine for the Passover.

Stranger (*coming forward*): You said that when you were free from his promise—now you will sell me his cup?

Jacob (*starting up*): Who is he?

Hannah: A passing traveler.

Stranger: And I am something of a trader, too—a dealer in silver cups—and good deeds—and other old-fashioned wares. I wish to buy your Elijah cup; I will give you this purse of gold for it.

Hannah: Tell him he cannot have it.

Jacob (*wavering*): We have kept it so long—the stranger will never come back for it. And we have never been so poor before.

Hannah (*almost tearfully*): But we must not sell it.

Stranger (*slowly*): But you said that if the cheer for your Passover failed——

Benjamin: Mother—mother—sell him the cup—I want to be well again.

Hannah (*lifts cup and stretches out her hand for the purse*): What if it is not mine to sell—shall we starve when we have this treasure within our house—shall my little one lie helpless during the long summer days when our gold will take us to the great physician? (*Suddenly.*) But, Benjamin, you mustn't grow up and think your mother was unfaithful—that she could not keep her trust! (*To the old man*): No, I cannot, I cannot! I promised to keep the cup until the owner returned, and I cannot break my promise. And you should not try to tempt me. You would bring evil into this house. (*She flings open the door; it has grown very dark outside.*) Go—go—do not tempt us any more. (*The stranger smiles, his strange, slow smile, but does not move. Then at the open door appears Mark, a young peasant, carrying a covered basket.*)

Mark (*entering*): The bridge has gone down—you were just in time, neighbor Jacob. But can you tell me what this means—this trick of the river? (*Shows basket.*) The river just swept it to our door. My wife and I saw it was the basket you always carry to town on market days.

Jacob (*seizing it*): The basket I lost when I crossed the bridge. (*Tears off cover.*) Yes, it is all there—strangely dry—all I bought for our Seder—we will have our feast tonight—as we have always had it. (*Takes out bottle of wine.*) Not broken in that dreadful torrent. (*He is about to put it on the table, but in his excitement drops the bottle and breaks it.*) We will have no wine for our Seder after all!

Hannah: Yet the stranger's promise did not fail us. And if I had sold the Elijah cup ——

Benjamin (*ruefully*): But there is nothing to put into it.

Stranger: No wine could ever taste so sweet to Elijah when he passes about the world tonight, little one, as the milk you shared with me tonight. (*He leans over the child and holds him to his breast for a moment, passing his hands over his body before he lays him back upon the pillows.*) Your hands were eager to bestow your poor supper on me; your feet will be quick to run along the river when the summer comes again.

Hannah (*frightened*): What do you mean? You are not a trader—a common traveler ——

Stranger: Ay, I am a traveler, for I have traveled many miles—and must travel many more before the journey of my people is over. And a trader, too, for I exchange blessings for good deeds and loving words. (*Again his slow smile.*) And also a redeemer of pledges—especially at Passover. (*He takes his staff from the corner.*) Now it grows late and I must set out on my journey.

Jacob: Stay with us. Our Seder will be a humble one—but if you will be our guest ——

Stranger: I must not linger. (*He takes a piece of matzos from the basket.*) But before I go, let me say a blessing over the unleavened bread and the wine.

Hannah: But we have no wine.

Stranger (*holding out silver cup to her*): Fill this with water.

(*The mother looking much perplexed, obeys him and fills the cup with water from the pitcher on the sill. Standing at the head of the table, the old man recites the blessing over the matzos and the wine before he puts the cup down upon the table and takes his staff again.*)

Stranger (*raising his hands in blessing*): May the peace of the Passover fill your hearts for the year that is to be, and may its joy never depart from this house.

Mark (*at door*): You cannot set out tonight; the bridge is down—the river is rising every moment.

Stranger (*quietly*): I shall not be harmed.

Jacob: You must not go ——

Stranger: The power that brought your provisions for the Passover back to your table will surely keep me in the storm.

Hannah (*coming to him as he stands in the doorway where the darkness hides him from view*): If you will only stay until tomorrow.

Stranger (*his voice sounding strangely through the darkness*): Tomorrow will be too late for my journey. Good-bye, my daughter, and keep my cup for another seven years!

Hannah (*in a frightened whisper*): “Keep my cup for seven years”. It was thus the stranger spoke to me seven years ago when he stood before the door in the darkness—and he spoke in the same voice. He tells me to keep his cup—Elijah’s cup —— (*She goes to table and picks it up mechanically.*) Elijah’s cup—(*then cries out in wonder*): It is filled with wine—red wine for the Seder! (*Jacob and Mark rush to her side.*)

Jacob: Red wine for the Passover! A miracle! (*Frightened.*) If it was Elijah ——

Benjamin (*rising in the excitement*): Let me see the wine! (*Half doubtfully at first, then with perfect confidence, he steps upon the floor and runs to the table.*) Mother, let me see the wine in the cup.

Hannah (*clasping him to her with a cry of joy*): He can walk again—see—his limbs are straight and fine—he said you would run about again. Oh, my baby, you can walk—you can walk——(*she hides her face in his breast and cries softly.*)

Jacob: Then it was Elijah —— (*he is still a little doubtful*).

Mark (*from the door*): The moon is rising—the path to the river is as light as day. (*His hand to his eyes.*) I can see the old man now—look—doesn't he see that the bridge—that it is down? (*Covers his eyes.*) We cannot save him. (*They stand in horrified silence, no one daring to move. Then the child runs to the window.*)

Benjamin: Mother—father—look, he does not need the bridge—the moonlight makes a path for his feet. (*Waving his hand.*) Goodbye—come again next year, traveler—goodbye!

(*The others hurry to the door and stand looking out. The moonlight falls upon the child's upturned face.*)

OUT OF EGYPT

A PASSOVER PLAY FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

In Three Acts

NOTES TO THE PRODUCER

This play should represent the "big production" of the year in a large Sabbath School, since it requires a maximum of time and labor in preparation. It should not be attempted unless at least three months are allowed for rehearsals of a large and difficult cast, since every scene must be handled with extreme reverence, with no suggestion of the tricks of the theater. The school should be able to furnish at least a half a dozen actors with sufficient maturity for the leading roles.

If, however, a simpler production is desired, portions of Acts I and II and all of Act III may be given.

The scenery may all be done in the Craig manner, with drapes for a background; a black one may be used throughout, or different colors for the various scenes. If special lighting effects can be employed, especially in Act III, so much the better, but this feature should be handled skilfully and thoroughly rehearsed, or it must be omitted altogether.

The properties are few and simple; nearly all of them can be made by the actors themselves. Ordinary pot covers may serve as cymbals in Act III.

The "Song by the Red Sea" may be chanted or sung to a traditional melody. The costumes of the Egyptian nobles and the princes should be rich and glowing with color; the servants and slaves should wear darker and plainer garments. The Hebrews, with the exception of Moses, should wear mean, tattered robes, which must not be allowed to look grotesque. Tissot's pictures of the Exodus will be found most suggestive in visualizing the various characters.

CHARACTERS

Egyptians

PHARAOH *Ruler over Egypt*
BITHIAH *His Daughter*
SHEPI *His First-born Son*
PRINCE OF AMMON.
PRINCE OF MOAB.
RANDOR *An Egyptian Taskmaster*
ORUS *His First-born Son*
Councillors, Priests, People of the Court, Peasants, Princes
from Other Lands, Servants, Dancers, Slaves

Hebrews

MOSES
 AARON
 MIRIAM
 ABIRAM
 DATHAN
 SARAH, *an old woman*
 DINAH
 RACHEL, *her daughter*
 MARAH
 ELIZUR

Elders, Men, Women and Children

TIME—The Exodus from Egypt.

PLACE—The Palace of Pharaoh, Goshen, the Banks of the Red Sea.

Out of Egypt

ACT I

A DELIVERER FROM EGYPT

It is early morning, and the open court before Pharaoh's banqueting hall is decked with fresh garlands. Slaves pass to and fro bearing baskets of fruit and flagons of wine; they enter the hall upon the left. Enter Prince of Moab and Prince of Ammon with their retinues following them with gifts. They stand and speak among themselves.

Prince of Moab: Must we wait before Pharaoh's door like very bondmen? From early dawn have we stood here, and yet he doth not come.

Prince of Ammon: He is Pharaoh, ruler of the world, and we—(*laughs bitterly*)—we are indeed his bondmen come to lay our gifts at his feet upon his birthday.

(Enter from the R., furtive and doubtful, a group of Hebrews, ragged and grimy, from the brickyards. There are a few sturdy men among them, Dathan and Abiram towering above the others; but for the most part they are trembling old men, women, young maidens and little children.)

Prince of Ammon: But who are these slaves who huddle before Pharaoh's door?

An Egyptian Councillor: They are of the Hebrew race, O prince, who long have pleaded with me to come before Pharaoh on this day of rejoicing, that they might lay their petitions before him and urge him to make their yoke easier to bear.

Prince of Moab: And is their lot so heavy?

Egyptian Councillor: Ay! (*As Sarah, a very old woman, totters in from the R., leaning upon a staff, and staring about her in a timid, dazed fashion, before she joins the others.*) See the aged woman; in the days of Asher, her father, the Hebrews were a mighty people in the land, dear unto Pharaoh for the sake of his servant Joseph. But a new Pharaoh rose who knew not Joseph, and those who were mighty were cast down; they became the slaves, and today they toil in the brick-yards of Egypt. (*He turns to greet a newcomer and the two princes talk together.*)

A Hebrew Woman: Think you that Pharaoh will listen?

An Elder: For we have waited long.

Dathan (*scornfully*): And will wait longer, for who can bring us deliverance?

An Elder: Only the God of our fathers.

Dathan: —— who was with our fathers, but has forgotten us!

(*Rachel, a girl of sixteen, hurries in from the R. and throws her arms about her mother. She seems greatly agitated.*)

Dinah (*startled*): My daughter!

Rachel (*breathlessly*): Oh, I was so frightened—just beyond the courtyard—as I sought to overtake thee—the way was narrow—(*she shudders*)—and a chariot bore down upon me and I seemed to feel the horses' hoofs trampling my face, and was cold with fear, and I could not move ——

Dinah (*clasping her closer*): Child—child——

Rachel: And the driver laughed and would have driven over me—but a youth who rode beside him caught the rein. And he sprang to the ground and drew me aside and

sought to calm my fears. Then those in the chariot bade him make haste, and he hurried away before I might thank him for saving me.

Abiram: And for what did he save thee—to wither and grow old in the brick-yards of Egypt!

A Hebrew Woman: Yea, death is better than life for those who eat bread of our servitude.

Sarah (*who has seemed lost in thought, now speaks for the first time*): Yet a deliverer will come to lead us from the house of bondage!

A Hebrew: But his name will be Death!

Elizur: Hush—Pharaoh is about to enter the banquet hall.

Miriam: And with him his daughter, Bithiah, the princess.

(*Pharaoh enters from the R. with great pomp and ceremony, followed by Shepi, Bithiah and courtiers. The kings and princes from other lands bow before him and offer their presents.—Orus enters from the R., richly dressed, his servants about him. He seems beloved of the common people, who crowd about him as he advances toward Pharaoh.*)

Rachel: Mother—mother—see ——(*points to Orus*).

Dinah: What is it, my child?

Rachel: Yonder is the youth who saved me (*timidly approaching Egyptian slave*). Who is that youth with the cloak of scarlet who bows before Pharaoh?

Slave: Orus, the eldest son of Randor, the first of Pharaoh's governors. (*Curiously.*) But what can he be to thee?

Rachel: Nothing! (*As she turns away.*) The eldest son of Pharaoh's governor! Better that I had perished than be saved to love the oppressor of my people.

(*The courtiers and the foreign kings retire into the background and Pharaoh and his train are about to enter the banquet hall.*)

Abiram: Will ye remain as stones? Hasten, lest Pharaoh pass us by!

(The Hebrews follow him timidly and throw themselves before Pharaoh.)

Pharaoh: Who are these?

Bithiah: They are people from among the Hebrews, O my father, who would petition thee on this day of rejoicing——

Pharaoh: —— which I will not have darkened with their gloomy faces! Let them be driven from my sight!

Bithiah *(as Pharaoh's attendants are about to obey his command):* But hear them, my father, for they ask so little——

Abiram *(boldly):* Only one day of rest among the seven, that we may have strength to labor the remaining six!

Pharaoh: Ay, and have one idle day to plot treasons against me and to dream mad dreams that ye will be lifted from the dungeon to the throne—as Joseph before you. *(Laughs.)* The Hebrews are all Josephs, all mad dreamers of dreams. But I will give you scant leisure for dreaming! *(Turning sharply.)* Randor!

Randor *(bowing before him):* Ay, my master.

Pharaoh: Ye have dealt far too gently with these slaves from Canaan. Henceforth even the little children and the youths and maidens will cease to eat the bread of idleness, and will toil in the brick-yards beside their parents—*(his glance falling upon Rachel, he draws her forward)*—even as this maiden——

Orus *(as Rachel gives a frightened cry):* My lord—the child is afraid. *(Pharaoh releases her laughingly, and he attempts to draw her to him protectingly, but she shrinks back.)* The little maid I met even now in the

courtyard! (*After a long look.*) Pharaoh will do thee no injury, nor could I find it in my heart to bring thee to harm. Why dost thou shrink from me?

Rachel (*freeing her hands*): Thou art a son of Egypt!
(*She clings to her mother with averted face.*)

Pharaoh: Thou hast heard my command, Randor!

Bithiah: But, surely, O my father, thou hast already made the lot of these people so bitter that thou wilt not lay this new burden upon them.

Pharaoh: And thou dost still plead for them? Hast thou forgotten the Hebrew boy I did spare for thy pleadings—the lad whom thou didst love as thy son—the lad who, when grown to manhood, forgot thee and thy mother-care and fled from our palace like a thief in the night, without a word of farewell even to thee?

Bithiah (*sadly*): Nay, I have not forgotten. Perhaps it is the will of the gods that my own sons should die and that he whom I loved even more than my own blood should desert me. But do not visit his ingratitude upon the heads of his helpless brethren—be as merciful to them as thou wast to the babe Moses I drew from the waters so long ago.

Pharaoh: No more! (*Turning to the Hebrews.*) And if ye presume to appear before my face again, the scourge shall teach you silence.

(*He enters the banquet hall with Bithiah and the people of the court and the strangers from afar following him. Orus seems about to speak to Rachel, who still clings to her mother, but Randor makes an angry gesture, and he follows his father after the others. The Hebrews remain in a despairing group in the center of the stage.*)

An Elder: Oh, for a deliverer who would save us from under the paw of the lion!

Sarah: But have I not told you how my father Asher carried in his heart the hope that a deliverer would come to us? Yea, this deliverer will come ——

Dathan (*scornfully*): As a mighty king, with his horsemen and chariots!

Sarah (*dreamily*): Nay, for the Lord saves neither by chariot nor by horsemen. Yet shall I see this savior of Israel when he comes, and I shall not taste of death until he leads me out of the house of bondage.

An Elder (*half believing*): But how will we know this deliverer of our people?

Sarah (*looking far off*): Our father Jacob told the thing to Joseph, and Joseph at his death told the secret to all his brothers and to my father, Asher. And my father told me the sign by which we should know our redeemer when he should come forth to lead us out of Egypt.

Several Women: But the sign?

Sarah (*entranced*): Thus spoke my father Asher: "For many years shall ye toil as bondsmen and eat your bread with tears; then one shall come to you whom the Lord God hath chosen and he will repeat in your ears the words of the Lord, declaring, 'I have surely visited you, saith the Lord, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt.' "

(*For a moment those about him listen in silent awe. Then Abiram laughs scornfully.*)

Abiram: Hopes and visions—visions and hopes! What hath our hopes brought us today but heavier scourge for our backs? Let the old women see visions and the young men—repeat them in the brick-yards of Pharaoh! (*He is about to go off R., when he confronts Aaron, who has just entered.*) Thou didst promise to be with us to present our petition to Pharaoh, O Aaron! Thou at least wast spared his mocking. (*Sharply.*) Why dost thou not speak? Dost thou, too, dream dreams and see visions?

Aaron (*quietly, but tensely*): Yes, for as I was about to enter this place I thought I saw my father's son whose face I have not looked upon these many years.

Miriam: Moses, our brother?

Aaron: Ay, and dressed in the garments of a shepherd, and I would have spoken to him, when he signed for me to leave him and would not heed my words.

Abiram: Another dreamer of dreams!

(*Moses enters slowly from the R. There is a long silence; even the skeptics are awed by his majestic appearance. Then Miriam goes to him with arms outstretched.*)

Miriam (*seeking to embrace him*): Moses, my brother! (*He does not heed her, but stares past her at the group of Hebrews.*)

Moses (*slowly and quietly*): These are my brethren—and my house must be the brick-yards of Egypt—until I lead them into freedom.

Abiram: Another dreamer of the brick-yards!

Moses (*thunderingly*): Silence! Mock me if thou wilt, but do not dare to mock the words of God! For He hath spoken to me and I have come out of Midian to speak His words unto you.

Hebrews (*murmuring*): Why trouble us with vain longings?
The Lord hath forgotten us!

Moses: Nay, for the Lord liveth and we are still His people.
Listen: I was keeping the flocks of Jethro, my father-in-law, and I came to the mountain of God, even unto Horeb. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto me in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and the bush burned with fire, yet the bush was not consumed. (*Murmurs of wonder among the people.*) And I wondered in my heart, and I said, "I will turn aside now and see this great sight, why the bush is not burned." And God called unto me out of the midst of the bush, and said, "Moses, Moses!"

Aaron (*breathlessly*): And thou?

Moses (*simply*): I said, "Here am I." And He said, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." I hid my face, for I was afraid to look upon God. And the Lord said, "I have surely seen the affliction of My people which are in Egypt, and have come to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land unto a land flowing with milk and honey. Come now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt."

An Elder: Did the Lord speak so unto thee?

(*The people draw closer about Moses to listen; only Sarah stands a little apart.*)

Moses: Ay, and He spoke further, saying, "Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say unto them: 'The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, hath appeared unto me saying: I have surely visited you and seen that which is done to you in Egypt.'"

Sarah: The words—the very words by which we were to know our redeemer when he came! (*In a sort of ecstasy.*) “I have surely visited you and seen that which is done to you in Egypt.” Ay, the Lord hath seen our oppression and hath sent us thee. Praised be the God of our father Jacob, who hath spared me to see this day! (*Kissing the hem of his robe.*) Praised be thou—our redeemer—the redeemer of Israel. (*The others press upon him, repeating the aged woman’s words with passionate devotion.*)

Moses (*sternly*): Nay—praise me not—but praise the One who sent me into the midst of you.

(*Enter Orus hastily from L. He is so eager to speak to Rachel that he draws her apart without noticing Moses standing in the midst of the Hebrews.*)

Orus: I have just managed to leave Pharaoh’s side for a moment—I but wished to tell thee—even as I befriended thee this morning—so will I befriend thy oppressed people for thy sake. (*They converse apart.*)

Moses (*to Dinah*): Who is yonder youth? He doth not seem one of our people.

Dinah: Nay—he is of the court—his father stands in high favor with Pharaoh.

Moses: I would speak to him—bring him hither.

Dinah: I dare not—he is of the court—the favorite of Pharaoh ——

Dathan (*with a bitter laugh*): And of these bondmen—these tremblers—thou wouldst make a free people! (*He goes out R., laughing scornfully.*)

(*But by this time Orus has turned; his eyes seek Moses’ face; he wavers, hesitates, then comes forward and, bowing before Moses, kisses the hem of his garments.*)

A Hebrew: Such reverence from a prince of Egypt!

Orus (*a little dazed*): When his eyes met mine I knew my captain stood before me!

Abiram (*abashed*): And if a son of Egypt pay thee homage, can I still remain stubborn and hard of heart? (*falling before Moses*). Forgive me my unbelief! Speak—and I will follow thee though thou dost lead me to my death.

Moses (*raising him*): I will not lead thee unto death, but unto life and freedom. (*Extending his hand to Orus.*) But what can I offer thee, who art of a people rich and powerful, while we (*points to the Hebrews about him*) are a race of slaves and groan beneath the whips of the taskmasters?

Orus: Yet will I serve thee and do thy will.

Moses (*taking a gold bracelet from his robe*): Take this token to the Princess Bithiah and bid her return with thee here, that he who once received the bracelet from her hand may speak with her again.

Orus (*bowing*): I will do thy will—my master! (*He goes quickly into the banquet hall.*)

Moses (*to the Hebrews*): Go—wait for me at the gates—when I have spoken with the daughter of Pharaoh I will join you.

(*They all go out led by Aaron and Miriam, murmuring among themselves. Sarah is one of the last; she leans upon Dinah's arm. When she reaches Moses, she again attempts to prostrate herself before him, but he raises her.*)

Moses: Nay—honor me not—but honor Him who sent me. For I am but a man, weak and wavering, and not worthy of the work He hath given me to do. (*He bows suddenly before her and places her hands upon his head.*) Bless me, O woman who trusted through the years, and pray that I, too, may have thy faith and not falter.

Sarah (*her aged voice breaking as she speaks*): O God of Abraham our father, Thou who didst preserve me through the weary years that I might gaze upon our deliverer, let the might of his purpose burn in his heart as Thy bush did burn before his eyes, that he may lead us out of darkness into light, out of slavery into freedom.

(*She again turns to Dinah and they go out slowly, while Moses stands alone with upturned face, his lips moving in prayer.*)

Moses (*passionately*): O God—they believe—they believe in me—help me to believe in myself!

(*Bithiah enters from the palace, preceded by Orus, who bows before her and retires. She is greatly agitated as she advances towards Moses, the bracelet extended in her trembling hand.*)

Bithiah: Moses—my son!

Moses (*drawing back*): Yea, Moses—whom thou didst save from the waters—but not thy son—for thou art a princess of Egypt!

Bithiah: Thou art he whom I have loved as a mother loves her first-born child. Yea, I am as a very mother to thee, for did I not give thee life anew when I drew thee from the waters?

Moses: And of what worth was the life thou didst gain for me?

Bithiah: Thou wast reared in this palace as my son.

Moses: While my brethren groaned beneath the red whips of their taskmasters.

Bithiah (*hotly*): Call not Israel thy brethren —

Moses: They are my people and I have returned to them at last.

Bithiah (*bitterly*): For a moment I did dream that thy heart yearned to be with me again—and that thou didst make this journey for my sake. But thy heart is of stone! Why should I look for a son's love in thee?

Moses: I have but one mother to love and serve—and she is Israel!

Bithiah (*pleading*): Moses, forget this wild dream. How canst thou save this people? They are broken with labor—they have the spirit of slaves.

Moses: Not I—but the Lord who sent me will save them. Tomorrow will I plead with Pharaoh for their souls.

Bithiah: He hates thee, and if his anger flame against thee, thy life is forfeit.

Moses: If I die, another man will arise to save my people.

Bithiah: O thou art mad! Listen to my counsel, and forget that thou art one of these wretched Hebrews, and trust to me to plead with Pharaoh my father that he take thee back into favor.

Moses: I cannot!

Bithiah: Think of thy life in my palace—soft ease, servants to do thy slightest command——

Moses: I would share the sufferings of my people——

Bithiah: ——to be as a prince of Egypt once more—to know again the friendship of Pharaoh himself, for I will plead with him for thy sake.

Moses: No, plead with him for my people—that he grant them the mercy of life—or I must die with them. (*Pleading.*) O mother—for you have indeed been as a mother to me—it is for one thing only that I sought thee. Thou who in pity didst plead for one miserable

babe from among the Hebrews and rear him as thy own child, now be as a mother to my unhappy people and lift them into life.

Bithiah: I will plead with Pharaoh for thy people. (*She approaches him.*) And in return—will thou not come back to me and be my son once more?

Moses (*drawing back*): Nay—there can be naught between the daughter of Egypt and the son of Israel. Think of me only as a child who hath died in his youth—for I am no longer thy son.

Bithiah (*clinging to him and weeping*): Thou wilt not desert me when I am lonely and have no child save thee! Thou wilt give me thy love now for the love I gave thee when a child. (*For a moment he wavers and she draws him closer.*) Thou wilt indeed be my son once more?

(*Moses, after a severe inward struggle, removes her hands and is about to depart.*)

Moses: Farewell, princess!

Bithiah (*sobbing*): Where wilt thou go?

Moses (*quietly*): I go to seek my brethren. (*He leaves quickly. Bithiah sinks to her knees weeping, her face covered with her hands.*)

ACT II

GOD HARDENS PHARAOH'S HEART

It is late afternoon—near sunset. The throne room of Pharaoh is shown with the ruler over Egypt upon his throne, his princes and councillors about him. Near the open doors on the L., through which glimpses of the royal gardens are seen, the young prince, Shepi, lounges upon a couch, several attendants fanning him, while a number of younger courtiers and dancing girls are grouped at his feet. At the opposite door on the R. are huddled the Hebrews seen in the first Act. Before Pharaoh stands Moses, his hand raised in an attitude of command; a little behind him stands Aaron. As the scene grows more intense, the Hebrews at the door advance and group themselves about Aaron.

Moses: Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel: Let my people go that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.

Pharaoh: Who is the Lord, that I should hearken unto His voice and let Israel go?

Moses: Yet hear me ——

Pharaoh: I have heard too much; it was but for my daughter's sake that I permitted thee and thy rabble to come before me. (*With an angry gesture.*) Now depart from before my face.

Moses: Not until I have delivered the word of the King of Kings, who hath sent me to plead the cause of His people before thee! Let us go, I pray thee, a three days' journey into the wilderness and sacrifice unto the Lord our God.

Pharaoh: That they may plot in their idleness and devise new mischief in their hearts! Randor—and ye, my other taskmasters! (*They bow before him.*) Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore; let them go and gather straw for themselves. And the tale of the bricks which they did make heretofore ye shall lay upon them; ye shall not diminish aught thereof; for they be idle; therefore they bid their leader come to me, saying, “Let us sacrifice to our God”. Let heavier work be laid upon the men that they may labour therein; and let them not regard the lying words of those who would lead them into evil!

Randor: All thou hast laid upon us will we do unto the Hebrew slaves.

Pharaoh: It is well! (*Turns mockingly to Moses.*) Behold, what succor thou hast brought to thy people, O helper of Israel!

Dathan (*stepping forward boldly*): O ruler of Egypt, why wilt thou punish us and lay upon the backs of thy servants still heavier burdens for the sake of this man, Moses? (*Assenting murmurs from most of the Hebrews.*) Truly, we of Israel are as a lamb seized upon by the wolf—and thou (*turning fiercely to Moses*)—thou art the gentle shepherd who would save us from the jaws of the wolf—and doth tear us piecemeal from his mouth. O Pharaoh, hearken not to this man who pleads for Israel; be thou our loving father even as thy sire was in the days of Joseph. (*Further murmurs of assent and cringing among the frightened Hebrews.*)

Pharaoh (*jeeringly to Moses*): O shepherd of Israel, thy very sheep turn against thee! (*To Randor and the taskmasters*): Remember to make their burdens so heavy that they will have no time to dream of the golden days of Joseph their father.

Orus (*throwing himself before Pharaoh*): O my master, spare this people and listen to the prayers of their leader, even though his own turn against him. Not for his sake, not for the sake of his God, grant his request, but even for the good of Egypt, let his people go from the midst of us.

Pharaoh: Hath this man bewitched thee, O son of Randor, that thou wouldst plead his cause?

Orus: O my master, mock him not, for he is mightier than we are, and the God he serves is more powerful than the gods of Egypt in their might!

(*Murmurs of amazement and horror among the Egyptians at his blasphemy. Young Shepi rises from his couch and joins the courtiers about the throne.*)

Pharaoh: Dost thou dare blaspheme against the gods of Egypt even before my face?

Orus (*boldly*): Yea, my master, for I have seen our ancient gods put to shame before the God of the Hebrews.

An Aged Priest (*as angry mutterings increase*): He is stricken with madness!

Orus: Nay, I am not mad. But, O men of Egypt, ye are mad and blind, yea, blind to the wonders that the God of Moses hath wrought in the midst of us. Have ye forgotten the plagues that the word of His servant Moses hath brought upon our land—how our rivers have seemed to turn into blood (*wailing among the people*)—our fields devastated with hail—our cattle afflicted (*the wailing increases*)—even our own bodies smitten with diseases this man Moses hath brought to soften your hearts that ye may be merciful to Israel?

Certain Egyptians: O Pharaoh—we have suffered—listen to this man whose God is more powerful than the gods of Egypt!

Aged Priest: This lad would incite others to blasphemy!

Another Priest: The misfortunes that have come upon us are due not to the God of Moses, but to our own gods, who are angered that such blasphemers be allowed to live beneath the heavens!

Other Egyptians: Let him be slain—it is he who hath brought this woe upon us—he is hateful to our gods—slay him—— (*They struggle to reach Orus, who is surrounded and protected by Pharaoh's guards.*)

Pharaoh (*as the mob's crying dies into sullen murmurs*): Peace—he will be punished—peace!

Orus (*appealing to Shepi*): Prince, thou art the beloved of thy father, and his eldest son. Plead with him for the sake of us, who will some day be thy subjects. Plead with him not to harden his heart against Israel, lest the God of Moses lay His hand upon thee in His anger against Egypt.

Shepi (*lazily*): The walls of my father's palace are strong—and his guards are faithful. I fear not the God of Israel.

Orus (*madly*): Art thou also blind—hast thou not yet seen that the gods of Egypt are as dust before Him?

Egyptians (*led by their priests*): Slay him—he brings evil upon us—slay him——

Pharaoh: Peace—he will be punished. Yea, if he were my own first-born, should he taste of death. (*He puts his hand for a moment upon Shepi's shoulder.*) But it grieves me, O my faithful Randor, to sentence him, thy only son.

Randor (*fiercely*): He is no longer my son.

Orus: O father—father! (*He hides his face in his robe.*)

A Priest: O Pharaoh, slay not this rash youth. Rather give him into our hands, that by fast and scourge we may teach him to reverence the gods of Egypt and tremble before their power.

Pharaoh: Yea, cast him into the dungeon of your temple, and do not let him look upon the sun until he is ready to acknowledge that the gods of Egypt are supreme upon the earth.

Rachel (*flinging herself before the throne*): O Pharaoh—he hath risked his life for mine—make me a prisoner—but let him go free.

Dinah (*drawing her back*): Peace, my daughter!

Moses (*his hand upon her shoulder as they drag Orus away*): Weep not, my child. For he will sleep more peacefully in his dungeon than the son of Pharaoh upon his silken couch.

Abiram (*in bitter shame to Dathan*): Yea, the stranger suffers for our God, while we of Israel mock His servant! (*To Pharaoh*): O king, this Moses is not as other men and his God is not as other gods. I who have mocked at his words am filled with shame; for the God of the whole earth speaks through his lips and all men must give heed to him—even as this lad of Egypt has done. He hath wrought wonders in our midst, indeed—the rivers of blood and the plagues upon man and beast. But greater than his power over earth and sea and air is his power over the hearts of men. Yea, I wonder how even thou, Pharaoh, canst harden thy heart against him. Then let Israel depart from this place; let the men of Egypt give their hearts to the God of the Hebrews and forget the gods of their fathers.

Pharaoh: I fear not this God—nor do I fear His people. But they shall, indeed, be driven forth from the land—they shall labor in the brick-yards until they die beneath their burdens and no longer have the power to turn the hearts of the men of Egypt unto their God.

(*A man dressed in rude garments rushes in and prostrates himself before the throne.*)

Guard: How darest thou rush into Pharaoh's presence unsummoned ——

Peasant: O Pharaoh, I am but a tiller of the soil, and my fields are narrow, and the grain is scanty in my bins. And my cattle have died from the plagues that have come upon them, and the plague of hail destroyed my fruit trees and the herbs in my fields.

Pharaoh (*mockingly*): Pray thou to Isis for abundant harvests—not to me!

Peasant: O my master—if thou wilt not give us bread we will perish. (*He points to the group of frightened men and women who have followed him and are now huddled about the outer door.*) But yesternight my neighbors and I were poor folk—but not beggars. For we still had a scanty harvest of grain to gather—but now ——

Peasants (*wailing*): —— the last of our grain—the last of our trees—woe—woe ——

Pharaoh (*impatiently*): What new misfortune hath come upon thee? Speak!

Peasant: A wind blew up from the east and it blew all the day and it blew through the night ——

Peasants: Woe—woe ——

Peasant: —— the wind brought a swarm of locusts—they seemed to cover the face of the whole earth that the earth was darkened—and they did eat every herb of the land and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left; and there remains not any green thing, either tree or herb of the field.

Peasants: The fields were stripped bare—we will starve—Pharaoh, save us!

Moses: O Pharaoh, give heed to the words of the God of Israel—for this is His doing, and thy people perish because of thy hardness of heart.

Pharaoh (*rising in wrath*): Begone! (*The guards drag the peasant away and he crouches with the others at the door. Pharaoh turns threateningly to Moses.*) This last plague hath the gods of Egypt sent upon us as a punishment since I have allowed thy words of blasphemy to go unpunished. Get thee from me; take heed to thyself to seek my face no more, for in the day thou seekest my face thou shalt die.

(*He descends from his throne and departs, followed by his court, while the guards drive the peasants away. The Hebrews form a despairing group about Aaron, who seeks to comfort them. As the young prince surrounded by his merry companions is about to pass out into the gardens, Moses catches his robe and detains him.*)

Moses: Thou art thy father's first-born son and dear to his heart. He will heed thy words though he be deaf to the prayers of his daughter Bithiah. Go thou to him, cling to his robe, and plead with him that he spare Israel and permit my people to depart in peace.

Shepi (*insolently*): Pray to thy God to soften my father's heart—my ears are sick from the pleadings of thee and thy people. Take thy hand from my robe, or——(*threatening*).

Moses (*sadly, without anger*): O youth, I take my hand off thy robe, but when the God of Israel lets fall His hand upon thee and thy companions He will not let you go.

(*For a moment Shepi gazes at Moses in sudden fear. Then he throws back his head and laughs merrily. Then from where they have waited for him about the throne rushes the group of youths and maidens, flower-crowned and radiant. They sing and dance as they gather about him, the maidens playfully tossing their garlands about him like chains. Some dance and others sing, all in striking contrast to the bitter despair of the group of Hebrews gathered about Aaron.*)

A Maiden: Come—let us feast!

A Youth: See—it is cool and pleasant in the gardens of thy father——

Maidens: We will sing for thee.

A Youth: The pools in the gardens are cool and refreshing—we will bathe——

Youths: Come—come!

Shepi (*laughing aloud in his joy*): Lead me, dear companions—I will follow—we will hold a court of our own among the roses—I will grant you all your wishes—and when I sit upon the throne of Pharaoh——

Youths and Maidens: Come—come—why lose a moment of our playtime? (*They drag him out into the gardens, laughing and singing as they go.*)

Moses (*wistfully*): Must he, too, suffer in his youth and joy—— (*He goes slowly to the group of Hebrews huddled by the door. From the gardens comes the sound of laughter and singing; it is heard throughout the scene which follows.*)

Aaron: O Moses, my brother, is there no help for us?

Moses: Fear not; it hath been told me that God will harden Pharaoh's heart that he will not hearken unto us until the wonders of the Lord are multiplied in the land. We must wait——

Abiram: How can we wait when every day our old men and our youths sink beneath the whips of the taskmasters?

Rachel (*sobbing*): When those who would plead for us are silenced!

Marah (*creeping timidly forward and showing Moses her child, wrapped in her robe*): And even our little children suffer from Pharaoh's oppression. See my little one—my only one—I have bound him to my back and carried him with me to the brick-yards—even until today.

Moses (*looking at the child with a tender pity in his face*):
—— and today?

Marah: Today the noon-day sun must have laid him low—
he grew faint—he would not eat—he hath been white
and still like this for several hours—but he is not dead—
he cannot be dead!

Miriam (*seeking to draw her away*): My brother Moses is
troubled with many other griefs!

Moses: Nay, Miriam, this woman's child is to me even as
are the whole family of Israel—as in days of old the
lamb I carried upon my arm was as precious as my
whole flock. Let me see thy child.

Marah (*eagerly*): Thou art a worker of wonders—even
though my little one be—ah, I cannot say it (*weaken-*
ing). But thou wilt restore him to me—he is my only
child—my first-born.

Moses (*sadly, covering the child's face with the mother's*
veil): Grieve not too bitterly, my sister, for the Lord
our God hath seen the sufferings of thy little one, and
He will soon give ear to our crying.

Marah: He cannot be dead—he hath only swooned. I have
lost father and brothers and husband—and now! Save
him, thou man of God—save my little one. (*She sinks*
at his feet weeping and imploring.)

Moses (*raising her gently*): Sister—if thou wouldst have
me restore thy child to thee ——

Marah (*as the others murmur among themselves*): Thou wilt
save him?

Moses: I ask but one little task of thee.

Marah: I listen, master—tell me ——

Moses: Bring me but a handful of corn—but a handful ——

Marah (*breathlessly*): Yea—(*turning to her neighbors.*)—
thou wilt give me of thy store—or thou ——

Moses (*detaining her*): Take but a kernel from each house.

Marah: There is no soul in Goshen that will refuse me ——

Moses: But remember one thing—thou must not take a kernel from a house where Death hath crossed the threshold.

Marah (*hardly heeding him*): I will bring it to thee—
Dinah, thou wilt give me a kernel of corn ——

Dinah (*in pity*): Yea, but thou must remember that my two brothers and this child's father (*drawing Rachel to her*) are dead.

Marah: But thou, Miriam?

Miriam: My parents have left me.

Marah: O Sarah, but a kernel of corn!

Sarah: Death hath entered the doors of my dwelling many times and I am the last of my father's house.

Marah (*turning to Moses, who has been watching her with a face of pity and understanding*): I can find no house into which Death hath not come.

Moses (*in tender rebuke*): Then, my sister, thou dost know how that the whole world weeps with thee in thy sorrow—for these women, even as thou, have sorrowed in their love.

Marah (*sinking at his feet and sobbing*): My baby—slain by Pharaoh—but yesterday he laughed upon my breast.

Dinah: My brothers and my husband—slaughtered in the brick-yards of Pharaoh!

Other Women: O Marah, thy loss is our loss.

A Hebrew Woman: My babe died yestermoth.

Marah (*unheeding*): But yesterday he laughed upon my breast.

Moses (*more to himself than to the others*): We know not His ways—but He will guide Israel as a shepherd guides his sheep. (*Suddenly he breaks down and takes the little bundle from Marah, holding it aloft as a sacrifice.*) But this little one—another lamb laid upon Thy altar—O Lord of Israel—how long—how long—how long!

(*From the gardens comes the song of the prince and his companions.*)

ACT III

ISREAL LEAVES THE HOUSE OF BONDAGE

SCENE I—It is near midnight within the house of Moses in Goshen. Without all is darkness, glimpsed through the two small windows and the door at the back of the stage; within the torches burn dimly. A long plank table stretches down the center of the room; about it are grouped elders from among the Hebrews, staves in their hands, burdens upon their backs; the women are soothing the younger children and making piles of the matzos, which they place in their bags.

Moses: And it shall come to pass when ye have come to the land which the Lord will give you according to His promise, that ye shall do this service. And it shall come to pass when your children shall say unto you: "What mean ye by this service?" that ye shall say: "It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, Who passed over the house of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He smote the Egyptians but saved Israel alive."

Aaron: Will the Lord send another plague upon Egypt ere Pharaoh bid us depart?

Moses: Even at midnight will the Lord do as He hath spoken, and will smite the Egyptians, but Israel will He save alive.

Sarah (*entering, leaning upon the shoulders of Dinah and Rachel*): It is so dark without—it is so dark.

Moses: Fear not—it is but the darkness which the Lord hath sent to cover the face of Egypt, but behold, in our dwellings alone is there light.

Sarah (*moaning in her weariness*): So long—so long—I have waited so long—surely my eyes must close in death ere we depart.

Dathan (*impatiently*): Why may we not go forth while all Egypt cowers under the darkness?

Others: Must we wait longer?

Dinah: Will the darkness never lift?

Rachel (*suddenly breaking into loud weeping*): And the darkness of his prison house—Orus, who pleaded for us—Orus!

Aaron (*sternly*): Weep not for this son of Egypt!

Moses: Nay, Aaron, my brother, for he hath felt the woe of Israel, and his sorrow hath become our sorrow.

Rachel (*clinging to his robes*): O master, thy words come before God—pray for him I love that he may be delivered from his prison house!

An Elder: Nay, pray for us who still dwell in the house of bondage.

A Woman: How long must we wait until the darkness lifts? Save us now—for only thou canst save!

Moses: I have no power to save. It is He alone who will save us. But wait——

Several Men (*interrupting*): Have we not waited? We will go mad from this long night of terror—let us go forth——

Others (*taking up their cry*): Yea, let us go forth——

Moses (*in a broken voice*): O God of my fathers, how can I bear this burden which Thou hast placed upon me—how can I be as a shepherd to this people who will not wait upon Thy word?

Abiram: Lead us forth——

Elizur: ——yea, ere the darkness lift——

Aaron: O my brother, heed their words—let us escape in the darkness.

Moses (*firmly*): Not until He sends me the sign to depart!

Several Men: And that sign will come ——

Moses (*raising the hour-glass from the table*): See—it is but a moment more until midnight—with midnight must come the sign for which I wait.

(*There is a long, tense silence; everyone stands as still as a graven image; then, as Moses points to the glass, a strange wailing is heard in the distance; it grows louder, until it swells to a chorus of lamentation and fear.*)

Hebrews (*afraid to move*): The sign ——!

Moses (*thunderingly*): Yea, the sign that the Lord hath heard our crying and will deliver us with an outstretched hand and a mighty arm.

Egyptian Slave (*running in and throwing himself before Moses*): O depart—depart from the midst of us!

Councillor (*enters, followed by servants, weeping and wailing*): Depart, lest Egypt become a land of graves. (*Breaking down and lamenting with others.*) O my first-born ——

A Servant: My eldest son—dead even as he slept ——

Egyptian Slave: My first-born, also—depart—depart ——

Egyptian Prince (*staggering in*): My son—heir to my name —dead!

An Egyptian: Yea, in every house of Egypt the first-born lies dead.

Other Egyptians (*tearing off their ornaments and thrusting them upon the Hebrews*): Here is gold—a bracelet—a diadem; see, it will make thee rich—take this—only depart—depart.

Hebrews (*appealing to Moses*): Yea, let us depart—lead us forth from Egypt—the sign hath come—let us depart.

Moses (*unmoved*): Shall we creep forth like slaves in the night! When the dawn breaks will we go forth before the eyes of men—a free people.

(The Egyptians, both masters and men, have crept into a corner of the hut and are wailing for their dead. The Hebrews, with the exception of Rachel, who stands aside weeping, do not heed them, but crowd about Moses with excited gestures.)

Hebrews (*one and another speaking*): Surely, it is time—see our staves in our hands! We have caught up our bread in the kneading troughs—we will have food for our journey—we dare not wait until dawn—if the darkness breaks Pharaoh will attempt to slay us ——

Moses: We will not depart like slaves in the night—but as free men. Nay, I will not lead you out of Egypt until Pharaoh himself doth plead for us to depart.

Elizur (*drawing Rachel before Moses*): See her weep—the shameless one! She weeps for the son of our enemy, when she should give praise to the God of our fathers who hath destroyed those who hated us.

Egyptian Noble: Yea, he hath cast us to the earth and filled our mouths with dust.

Moses: Do not weep, my child, for it will be well with Israel.

Rachel: But I do not weep for Israel—I weep for Orus—the first-born of his father—he whom I will never look upon again—since he hath died with the others.

Abiram and Others: This is no time for tears—let us depart!

Egyptian Councillor: Leave the land else we must all perish with our other children.

Egyptian Slave (*crouching in doorway*): A torch—a torch flickering in the blackness—perhaps the darkness is about to lift.

An Egyptian: It comes nearer.

Other Egyptians (*in joy and fear*): The darkness will lift—we will look upon the sun again—the torch does not flicker ——

(*Enter Orus in coarse prison garb. He is white and thin from his ordeal in the dungeons, but when he speaks his voice is high with joy.*)

Orus (*thrillingly*): Praised be the God of Israel who raised me from the pit and drew my feet from death!

Rachel: Orus—thou—thou ——

Orus (*drawing her to him and addressing Moses, while the others stand about him in awe*): In my dungeon in the temple, I heard whispers of the further marvels that the Lord of Israel hath wrought in Egypt. And though I knew Him not, I prayed that He would save Israel and lead him from the place of bondage—though I never left my prison house. I heard, too, of the great darkness that lay like a cloud upon the face of Egypt, and the priests, my keepers, became afraid. But in my cell alone was there light, and they marveled at the wonder, and so did I.

Rachel (*half afraid*): Was it because thou wast accepted as a son of Israel?

Orus: Yea; for when those of the temple lay dying about me—from the first-born of the high priest to the first-born of the meanest of the temple servants, I, the first-born of my father, looked for death. But lo, the doors of my prison swung open and a ray of light pierced the darkness and I followed it to thee—and to freedom. (*To Moses*): Surely, thy God hath accepted me, and I may follow thee and thy people and be one with them.

Moses (*his hand on the boy's head in blessing*): Thou shalt establish a house in Israel and thy children shall be blessed in the God thou hast come to serve.

Elizur: Is it not yet time? Let us depart!

(A new clamour arises; Moses does not seem to heed; he stands by the door, his face raised to the sky. At last he turns, speaking quietly.)

Moses: Above the palms I see the morning star. *(For a moment he leans upon Aaron's shoulder, weary, and almost spent from the long vigil; then he draws himself up with an effort and speaks as a general addressing his army.)* Take ye your burdens on your backs and your little ones by the hand; take your staves and the torches and go without and wait until I give you the word to depart. *(They obey.)* Go ye *(turning to several of the younger men)* and tell our brethren to take up their burdens and make ready without the doors of their huts. And when dawn breaks I will surely come to them. *(To the Egyptians.)* And bear ye witness that we go out of Egypt not in fear and trembling, but trusting in the Lord our God who hath delivered us.

(The last of the Hebrews depart, the Egyptians following, with the exception of several of the nobles, who still lie mourning within the door. With the torches taken away, the room has grown so dark that it is impossible to distinguish the face of Moses as he stands with uplifted hands and prays.)

Moses *(wearily)*: They believe me, God—they believe me—but where shall I lead them—and how shall I resist the might of Pharaoh if he delay and harrow us even at the borders of Egypt? O put new courage into their fearful hearts—and into mine!

(In the silence that follows, a figure may be discerned creeping into the room, followed by several other forms which halt near the door. The newcomer approaches Moses and speaks through the darkness.)

Voice: O my friend Moses, pray for me to thy God!

Moses: Who art thou, and what is thy name?

Pharaoh: I am Pharaoh who stands pleading before thee.

Moses: Art thou that Pharaoh who did say unto me: "On the day thou seekest my face again thou shalt die"? Why hast thou sought me? It is not the custom of kings to seek the huts of their bondmen.

Pharaoh: My son —— (*he breaks off weeping, and those who have followed lament also.*)

Moses: Ay—thy son—safe in thy palace!

Pharaoh: My first-born—the heir to my throne—he lies dead upon his couch—even as the first-born of the slave who grinds the corn.

Moses: Thinkest thou that he should be spared while the son of thy slave who was guiltless died for thy hardness of heart? O Pharaoh, Pharaoh, be grateful to the God of the Hebrews that He hath spared thee thine other sons. Thou hast afflicted and oppressed my people, yet will He be merciful to thee and to those who remain of thy household. Even for the sake of thy daughter whose heart hath felt pity for Israel. Now heed to His voice and all will yet be well with thee and Egypt.

Pharaoh: I am as a broken reed before the God of the Hebrews—as water spilled upon the ground. Let Him lay His commandments upon me and I will obey.

Moses: Go thou to the doorway and speak to the people of Israel gathered there: "Ye children of Israel—ye are your own masters. Depart from among my people. Hitherto ye were the slaves of Pharaoh, but henceforth ye are under the authority of God. Go forth and serve the Lord your God."

Pharaoh: Nay—I will not ——

Egyptians: Ah, master, master—obey the God of Israel, for
He is stronger than our gods ——

Pharaoh: Then let the elders of Israel depart, and the heads of families, but not your young men nor your little ones. These shall I keep as hostage that the God of Israel will trouble me no more.

Moses: Nay, for today a new nation is born, and a whole people goeth forth from Egypt; we will go with our young and with our old—with our sons and our daughters; yea, not a soul of Israel shall remain in the house of bondage.

Egyptians: O Pharaoh—our father—let them depart lest we perish!

Egyptian Nobleman: I lost my one child—but thou hast other sons to die. Now let the sons of Israel depart—

Pharaoh (*after a long struggle*): Yea, they shall depart. (*Goes to door and stands looking out into the darkness, which slowly lifts as he speaks.*) “Ye children of Israel, ye are your own masters. Depart from among my people. Hitherto ye were the slaves of Pharaoh, but henceforward ye are under the authority of God. Go forth and serve the Lord your God.” (*A great cry of rejoicing bursts from the Hebrews who crowd about the door.*)

Moses (*at door*): Yea, praise the God of your fathers, who hath stretched out His hand to save Israel. Cry aloud to Him, for ye are no longer the servants of Pharaoh but belong to the Lord our God. (*He advances a little, and they repeat after him in swelling chorus*): Hallelujah! Praise ye, O servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord! (*He takes his place at their head, and now the dawn falls upon their upturned faces.*)

Moses (*simply*): Come, my children—it is dawn at last—let us go.

(*In the dim light one sees the Hebrews filing past carrying their burdens upon their backs, leading their little ones*

by the hand. A few carry torches. They sing in triumph as they pass. Pharaoh stands in the middle of the hut, his face covered with his robe, his attitude expressive of shame and despair. Suddenly he throws back his head, his face hard and determined as he calls several of the Egyptians about him.)

Pharaoh (*pointing to the Hebrews passing the door*): Was I mad to tremble before a race of slaves? I feared them in the darkness, but now it is dawn! See, they are broken with toil and have no weapons. (*To one and the other*): Go ye and alarm my horsemen—my men who run before my chariot—we will after them and slay them—they have the old and weak and helpless among them—they cannot journey swiftly—yea, we will surely overtake them ere they reach the banks of the sea.

(The Egyptians steal out; Pharaoh is left alone, confident and defiant.)

SCENE II—**NOTE**: *In order to effect a quick change of scene, it may be well to drop a painted background or even plain dark draperies for a setting.*

It is sunrise, just a little distance from the shores of the Red Sea. The children of Israel are shown grouped about Moses, who stands a little above them amongst the rocks. For a few moments they seem dumb with awe and wonder.

Moses (*leading the others*): I will sing unto the Lord, for
He hath triumphed gloriously:

Others: The horse and the rider hath He thrown into the
sea.

Moses—

The Lord is my strength and song,
And He is become my salvation:
This is my God and I will praise Him;
My father's God, and I will exalt Him.

Miriam—

The Lord is a Man of War:
The Lord is His name.

Others: Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath He cast into
the sea.

Miriam—

Thou didst blow with Thy wind, the sea covered them:
They sank as lead in the mighty waters.

Moses—

Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the gods?
Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness,
Fearful in praises, doing wonders?

Miriam—

The Lord is a Man of War:
The Lord is His name.

Others: Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath He cast into
the sea.

(The closing lines are repeated in glad triumph. The women and young girls, at a signal from Miriam, dance about her, some of them playing upon cymbals, others waving palms. As the dance is about to end the children of Israel repeat):

Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously;
The horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea!

(And the curtain descends slowly.)

RUTH OF MOAB

A SPRINGTIME PLAY

In One Act

NOTES TO THE PRODUCER

This dramatization of the Book of Ruth may be given in its present elaborate form or with extreme simplicity. It will be found most suitable for an outdoor pageant play to be given at the end of the school year. Or it may be given upon a large stage as the joint work of several Sabbath Schools, with special emphasis upon the interpolated scenes which portray oriental life, thus enlarging its educational value. On the other hand, only the scenes written with dialogue need be given if the play is desired for informal closing day exercises. Should the Sabbath School boast advanced classes in Hebrew, it would prove most valuable to translate a shorter version of the first and last scenes into Hebrew, to be given at the end of the year's work.

The songs and the harvest dance are left to the discretion of the producer; they may be either added or dropped, depending upon the length of the play.

The text contains suggestion for an ideal indoor setting.

The costumes should be modeled upon any of the modern illustrated books on travel through Palestine. Boaz should be more richly dressed than the harvesters. Naomi should have her flowing hair powdered and wear dark garments. Ruth wears garments of gray or blue until the last scene, when she should wear robes of yellow or delicate pink.

CHARACTERS

BOAZ	<i>A Landowner of Bethlehem</i>
NAOMI	<i>His Kinswoman</i>
RUTH, ORPAH.....	<i>Women of Moab, her Daughters-in-Law</i>
EZRA	<i>Nearest of kin to Naomi</i>
NATHANIEL	<i>An Overseer in the Fields of Boaz</i>
PENINNAH, ZIPPORAH, RACHEL.....	<i>Women of Bethlehem</i>
<i>Elders, Reapers and Gleaners; Shepherds and Children</i>	

Ruth of Moab

A curtain representing a road, surrounded by high rocks and dreary forests, the whole to be an impression of a lonely and dangerous wayfare for travelers. But from the right (of the spectator) enter three women, one of them old and gray-haired, and worn with sorrow, dressed in dark, mean robes; clinging timidly to her hand is a young girl whose delicate garments are travel-stained and torn from the briars by the roadside; but the older woman is supported by a girl in simple garments, who walks confidently and carries the burdens of the other two. As they reach the middle of the stage Naomi, for it is she, about to return to Bethlehem, turns and points backward to the land of Moab. Orpah shakes her head and hides her face against Naomi's shoulder, weeping, but Ruth answers her quietly.

Ruth: Entreat me not to leave thee, Naomi, for I cannot.
Nor will Orpah, the wife of thy son who is dead.

Orpah: Yes, I will go with thee, my mother—but I am afraid—for is it not a weary journey to Bethlehem?

Naomi (*sinking upon a rock to rest*): Once the road from Bethlehem to Moab was not long, for I leaned upon the arm of my husband, and my two sons who are dead were with me. But today——(*She weeps, and Orpah kneels beside her, seeking to bring her comfort.*)

Orpah: Do not weep, for Ruth and I will be as daughters to thee.

Naomi: Nay, for your place must be in Moab, while I will journey to Bethlehem, the city of my father. As for you, my daughters, go, return each of you to her mother's house; the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead and with me. The Lord grant

that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. (*She kisses Orpah, who still weeps at her knee, then looks down to Ruth, who stands beside her, and draws closer, that she may embrace her also.*)

Ruth (*simply*): Nay, but we will return with thee unto thy people.

Naomi (*putting her gently away*): Nay, my good children, for why should ye share the bread of bitterness that I must eat in my old age? Why should ye journey with me to a land of strangers to eat of the bread of poverty in a far-off place? (*She rises.*) Rather return ye to Moab; wed again, and know the love of a husband and of little children.

Orpah (*clinging to her*): I would indeed go with thee—but my aged parents—they need me also and—(*she shudders*) the long, strange journey makes me afraid.

Naomi (*kissing her*): Peace be upon thee, my good daughter—(*embracing Ruth, but not daring to meet her eyes*). Now return ye to the place where ye were born—and the blessing of the Lord rest upon both of you. (*She picks up the burden which Ruth has dropped and seems about to resume her journey, but she cannot; instead she turns to the two girls, who go slowly off to the R. Orpah has her face hidden in her robe, but Ruth still carries herself bravely; her face betrays her inward struggle. Left alone, Naomi sinks down upon the stone again and hides her face. Her shoulders are shaken with sobs. Ruth returns, and kneeling, throws her arms about her.*)

Naomi (*looking at her in amazement*): Thou—Ruth! Why art thou here again? (*Rising.*) Behold, thy sister-in-law has gone back unto her people and unto her gods; return thou after thy sister-in-law. (*She says no more because of the tears which choke her words.*)

Ruth (*still kneeling and speaking in a tone of passionate entreaty*)—

Entreat me not to leave thee,
And to return from following after thee;
For whither thou goest, I will go;
And where thou lodgest, I will lodge;
Thy people shall be my people,
And thy God my God;
Where thou diest will I die,
And there will I be buried;
The Lord do so to me,
And more also,
If aught but death part thee and me.

Naomi (*who has stood irresolutely during Ruth's appeal, now draws the girl to her and assures her brokenly*)—

The Lord do so to me,
And more also,
If aught but death part thee and me.

(*They leave the stage, L.; Ruth carries the burden and supports Naomi. As quickly as they have departed the curtains are drawn to show a curtain just behind them, representing the gates of Bethlehem. [If painted drops are not used, the dark curtain should be exchanged for one of stone-colored gray.] It is sunrise. Before the gates sit elders talking together; a few little children are playing; a potter turns his wheel and several youngsters watch him with interest; reapers pass on their way to the field, among them Boaz, Ezra and Nathaniel; a shepherd passes carrying a lamb under his arm; a peasant with baskets of fruit. These all pause for a moment's chat at the gate before passing off R. and L. to the day's work. Several women with pitchers upon their heads stand gossiping among themselves; one carries a small child on her arm. All about is a pleasant hubbub and activity, in striking contrast to the weariness*

of Naomi and Ruth, who enter slowly from the R. They stand apart for a moment, then they advance toward the women near the well.)

Ruth: Wilt thou not give my mother to drink from thy pitcher, for she is a-thirst and is very weary?

Naomi (*as Peninnah holds her pitcher out to her*): Dost thou not know me, Peninnah?

Peninnah (*peering into her face*): Can this be Naomi?
(*The others come closer and whisper among themselves.*)

Naomi: Call me not "Naomi"; call me "Mara": for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full and the Lord hath brought me home again empty. Why call me Naomi, seeing that the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?

Rachel (*putting her tiny child upon the ground and taking Naomi's hands in hers*): My heart can feel thy sorrow, for it is even as mine own. See, my rags—for the death of my father and my husband hath left me in want, and I must follow the reapers and glean after them for food for me and my little child.

Peninnah (*giving water to Naomi*): Fear not; for our people will show mercy to the widow and to the stranger within our gates.

Ruth (*turning eagerly to Naomi*): Let me go with her unto the fields and glean among the ears of corn; I will bring home something to eat, that you may eat and be satisfied.

Rachel: Let her go with me, for I go to glean in the fields of Boaz, thy kinsman.

Zipporah: And come thou home with me, Naomi, and rest thee after thy long journey.

(*Naomi embraces Ruth and goes out L. between Zipporah and Peninnah. One by one the others have passed*

from the scene, and no one remains but a gray-bearded elder who sits nodding at the gate, and the potter, still turning his wheel, while the little children watch him. Enter several reapers from R.)

Rachel (*pointing after them*): Come, let us follow these men, for they are reapers in the field of Boaz, and we will glean after them.

(She looks about her for her child, who has toddled off to join the children about the potter. With a good-natured shake, she raises him to her shoulder, and taking Ruth's hand, leads her off L. after the reapers. The "drop curtain" falls for a moment, while the stage is cleared, and the "gate curtain" is drawn aside. When it is raised we see the reapers in the fields of Boaz singing as they work among the sheaves. A few gleaners follow after them; several tiny children play and frolic in the shade. Boaz, entering from the R., picks up one and tosses him up in the air. The others run about him and cling to his robes. He approaches the reapers, who answer his salutation, but without ceasing in their work.)

Boaz: The Lord be with you.

Workers: The Lord bless thee, O master.

(Ruth enters with Rachel from L., following the others who begin their work after a moment's speech with Nathaniel. Rachel, sending her child to play with the others, follows them, but Ruth lingers doubtfully in the foreground.)

Boaz: The Lord be with thee.

Ruth (*her eyes seeking the ground*): The Lord bless thee also.

Boaz: Hast thou come to work with the reapers?

Ruth: Nay, only to glean after them. (*Glancing up shyly.*)
Art thou, perhaps, a worker in the fields of Boaz?
Thinkest thou that he will permit me to glean among his sheaves?

Boaz (*smiling*): Ay, I will answer for him.

Ruth: I thank thee. (*She goes to Rachel, who has been speaking to Nathaniel, and a moment later is busy among the sheaves.*)

Boaz (*as Nathaniel comes past him*): Who is that damsel yonder?

Nathaniel: Rachel tells me that she is Ruth, a Moabitish maiden that came back with Naomi out of her own country for love of her, and now toils among the gleaners lest her mother-in-law want for food.

(*Boaz nods as though satisfied; Nathaniel passes on, but Boaz remains in his place until Ruth passes; then he bids her stop and speak with him.*)

Ruth: Forgive me, my lord, for when I spoke before I knew not that thou wast Boaz, the owner of this field and the master of all who labor therein.

Boaz: Nor did I know that thou wast Ruth, the daughter-in-law of my kinswoman, Naomi, and that thou didst leave thy father and thy mother to come to dwell among a strange people. The Lord recompense thy work and a full reward be given thee of the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust. (*A maiden passes, carrying a jar upon her shoulder and a basket of bread in her hand.*)

Boaz (*to Ruth*): Come hither and eat of the bread and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. (*He makes a place for her among the sheaves and spreads the food before her, talking to her as they eat together.*)

(*The reapers and gleaners have thrown themselves down to rest, and the little children serve them. A number of the workers dance a harvest dance, which must not give the idea of a formal number; on the contrary, it will be started by one group, who will drop back into their places while others*

dance; they, too, will rest, while one or two couples dance; then a few from each group will join while the others eat, laugh and talk among themselves.)

Nathaniel (*as the dance ends*): Now go ye into the next field and reap there also.

(The workers go out slowly, singing their harvest song as they go, and carrying their sheaves with them. Ruth also rises, goes to Rachel, and is about to pass out with her, but Boaz detains her, and they stand in silence until they are left alone.)

Boaz (*taking her hand*): I am thy kinsman, Ruth, and I will do the part of a kinsman to thee. See, I have wide fields; why should I reap my harvest where thou dost but glean? Hold out thy veil, Ruth. (*She obeys, and he fills it with barley.*) Take this to Naomi, thy mother-in-law, as a gift from me, her kinsman Boaz, and tell her the words that I have said to thee. (*He is about to start after the reapers when she smiles up at him shyly, and he again takes her hand, finding it difficult to depart.*) What wilt thou, Ruth?

Ruth: Only to thank thee—for why have I found favor in thy sight, that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?

Boaz: Am I as a stranger to thee, Ruth? (*He takes her hands and forces her to look at him.*)

Ruth: Nay, my lord—and I am glad that I have come to Bethlehem.

(He does not speak, but he wraps a portion of his mantle about her and draws her to him protectingly. From the next field comes the singing of the harvesters. They stand gazing at each other, a great happiness in their faces, until the curtains shut them from the view.)

(The curtains before us again show the gates of Bethlehem, but now it is sunset. The nodding elder still sits be-

fore the gate, a little apart from the others. They are gathered about one of their number who reads to them from a scroll; reapers come from the fields, singing softly, many of them carrying sheaves; a few shepherds enter and stand leaning upon their long crooks and talking together; the little children are too tired to play now, but a few of them are making garlands, and two of the boys are making a small bower with some green branches. Rachel enters, carrying her gleanings in her veil; her child has fallen asleep upon her shoulder. In short, it is almost the same scene as that at sunrise, but now we have the quiet afterglow of the sunset and a feeling of peace and rest instead of the active bustle and color of the wakening day. During the scene it grows darker, then the stage is flooded with moonlight.)

Boaz (*to Ezra, with whom he enters from the R.*): As I have told thee, Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, would sell the parcel of land which was our brother Elimelech's; there is none closer to redeem it than thee; and I am after thee.

Ezra (*sullenly*): I will redeem it for myself, that this land pass not out of the family of Elimelech.

Boaz: But the day thou buyest the field, thou must buy it also of Ruth, the Moabitess, the wife of the son of Naomi who is dead.

Ezra: I will not redeem it for the sake of Ruth, lest she wed again and the land becomes the possession of her husband and of her children. Take thou my right of redemption on thee, for thou art next of kin.

Boaz: Will ten of you men of Bethlehem sit here beside me and hear what I have to say? (*They group themselves about him and Ezra.*) Ye all must know that according to the law of our fathers Ezra, next of kin to the wife of Elimelech, would lay his right of redemption upon me, that I may purchase the land which was her hus-

band's and her son's after him. Be ye witness, therefore, that I take this right of redemption upon me?

Elders (*as Ezra removes his sandal and places it in the hands of Boaz*): We are witnesses.

Boaz (*rising*): Ye are witnesses this day that I have bought all that was Elimelech's and all that belonged to his sons, Chilion and Mahlon?

People: We are witnesses.

Boaz (*seeing that Ruth has entered with Naomi, he draws them into the circle and others rise and stand about them*): Ye are witnesses that on this day I take to wife Ruth, the Moabitess, the daughter-in-law of Naomi?

People: We are witnesses.

Others (*chanting*)—

The Lord make the woman that is come into thine house
Like Rachel and like Leah,
Which two did build the house of Israel;
And do thou worthily in Ephratah,
And be famous in Bethlehem!

(*As they sing the shepherds form an archway with their crooks, the children with their green boughs, while some throw flowers before Ruth and Boaz, who, amid the singing and rejoicing, pass between them and go out, followed by the people of Bethlehem.*)

(NOTE: *If desired, the curtains may be drawn again to show the harvest festival in the field, Naomi and Ruth among the people, while Boaz stands at the altar and chants the harvest service and the others join in the chorus.*)

“LET THERE BE LIGHT”

A PAGEANT

In Seven Episodes

NOTES TO THE PRODUCER

Throughout the pageant translations from the Hebrew appear, but if the actors know the songs in the original, and have had sufficient Hebrew to learn the translated poems, it is desirable to have them given in Hebrew.

If time permits and long and frequent rehearsals are possible, and if enough children are available to fill the many roles without "doubling", it will prove worth the labor to give the pageant entire. On the other hand, should a less elaborate entertainment be desired, or if it is impossible to obtain children for all the episodes, the number of episodes may be cut down with the corresponding introduction to these scenes, while the actors in the remaining episodes may be reduced, without lessening their pictorial effect, if given on a small stage. The dances used in the interludes may give way to solo dances and the choral effects may be dropped.

A Processional at the beginning of a pageant is usually an anti-climax. It would be well to bring on one group at a time with the Processional, in historical sequence, at its close.

Children of all ages should be used. Characters like Wisdom, the Old Man, etc., demanding voice, feeling and stage presence, should be given to adolescents—if possible, leaders and teachers. (It will be found invaluable in dealing with large groups thus to scatter responsible actors among the "supers" to direct them.) Seniors should be given speaking parts of secondary importance; younger children may come on as "supers" or present group dances; their very young brothers and sisters may appear as little children in such scenes as the Exodus.

Costumes may be simple, but should be as accurate as possible, each group being sharply differentiated from the following group in color and general character of robes worn. For example, the primitive, dark, coarse garments of the Children of Israel in the Wilderness should be in striking contrast to the bright, luxurious robes of the courtiers and soldiers in the following episode in Jerusalem. For this reason the designing of the costumes should be in the hands of one person, instead of each group's color scheme being in charge of another individual.

The properties, few in number, can all be made by the actors themselves, except the Torch. It will be found safer to have a large torch wired by an electrician, the bulb being of red glass incased in a deep bowl at the end of a stick, representing a primitive torch. All the properties should be in place before the beginning of the pageant. No curtains should be needed, even if the pageant is given on an indoor stage. If the stage is small, the throne, instead of being at the head of a flight of stairs, can be suggested by a large chair, draped in gray, placed on a low dais.

It will be worth the trouble and expense to print programs. These will help spectators to follow the story more easily, and, if they contain the words of some of the less familiar songs, will do much to promote singing by the audience. The title and descriptive quotation should be printed above the cast of characters. It may be found wise to print a very short synopsis of the pageant's story before the cast of characters. Again, it is sometimes found advisable to print the entire pageant in cheap editions, to be used as prompt books by the actors and to be sold to the audience, at cost, for souvenir programs.

The few poems to be given in chorus may be recited or set to some simple melody, not too popular in character. Or, if desired, they may be chanted.

The music and dances may be practiced separately. It may be found best to rehearse each group separately, with extra rehearsals for the leading characters of the Prologue. Gathering all groups together when perfect, for intensive dress rehearsals. This sounds strenuous—but a pageant that is worth doing is worth doing well.

CHARACTERS

(In order of their appearance)

PROLOGUE — *Wisdom, Joy, Grief.*

EPISODE I — *Abraham, Sarah, Abraham's Servant, Isaac.*

INTERLUDE — *Miriam, Maidens, Moses, Aaron, Hebrews out of Egypt, Joshua.*

EPISODE II — *Characters of Interlude.*

EPISODE III—*Jeremiah the Prophet, Baruch the Scribe, King Jehoiakim, People of Jerusalem, Priests and Elders.*

EPISODE IV—*Maidens of Jerusalem, Maccabean Soldiers, Judas Maccabeus, Priest, Old Man, Another Priest, Little Child, People of Jerusalem.*

EPISODE V — *Vespasian (Roman General), Titus (his son), Roman Soldiers, Rabbi Yochanan ben Zak-kai, His Pupils, Messenger.*

INTERLUDE — *Jehudah Halevi, Page.*

EPISODE VI—*Old Rabbi, Little Boy, Spanish Exiles.*

EPISODE VII—*America, An Old Man, A Child, Exiles from Many Lands, Isaiah (Prophet of the New Day).*

“Let There Be Light”

PROLOGUE

A throne, as though built of natural rocks, should be set in the middle of the open place or stage where the action occurs. A long flight of stairs leads up to it. Enter Wisdom dressed in long robes of shimmering blue, a silver crown about her head, a lighted torch in hand. Behind her walk her two attendants, Joy, dressed in flowing white, and Grief, in black, each carrying an urn. They take their places at the top of the stairs, Wisdom seated upon her throne, still holding her torch, at her feet the symbols used later in the pageant; the two attendants are at either side, Joy on the right hand, Grief on the left.

Wisdom I, Wisdom, daughter of Eternity,
The Keeper of the Light which will not fail,
Though Chaos at the last o'erwhelm the world,
Have found my servant of the living lamp:
Israel, the bearer of the Light of God,
Who, through the years, will keep alive the
 flame,
From sire to son, a deathless heritage.

(Turning to her attendants)

And you, O Joy, will show your radiant face
But seldom to my keeper of the Light,
And from your urn of blessings grudging give,
While you, O Grief, will wander at his side
Through weary ages in his endless search,
And from your urn will he drink bitterness.

(To audience)

For he who bears aloft the torch of truth,
Who yearns for wisdom as a man for bread,
Will be rejected and despised of men,
And, bruised, bear the stripes which heal the
world.

EPISODE I

THE LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

Wisdom (*as the group of desert folk, Abraham and Sarah leading them, enter from extreme right and begin to cross stage*):

Lo, Abraham, the first to bear the Light,
Who gropes through darkness, dreaming of the dawn!
(*To Joy*)

Yours be the joyful task to guide his feet
In paths of happiness and lovely peace,
That he may raise a Torch to light the world.

(*Joy, taking the torch from Wisdom, descends the stairs, joining the group as it reaches the foot of the throne.*)

Joy (*in the manner of a Herald*): Thus saith the Lord:
Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred and
from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show
thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will
bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a
blessing: and in thee shall all the families of the earth
be blessed.

(*Abraham bows in humble obedience, and, carrying the torch, leads his people a little to the left where the group halts. Joy remains at foot of throne.*)

Abraham: My people, we have bowed us before sun and
moon and stars. But having found the Light, we will
worship only the greater Light that called them into
being and bade them burn. And He will be our God.
(*In pantomime the group bows before God in worship.*)

Joy (*pointing upward*): Look, Abraham, toward heaven, and tell the stars if thou be able to count them. So shall thy seed be, if thou art a faithful servant of the Light.

Abraham: Yea, I will serve the Lord, seeing that He is God and there is none else besides Him.

Joy (*pointing to right*): And for thy loyalty will He give thee this son to carry on the Light that shall burn forever. Through Isaac thy son shall the nations of the earth be blessed.

(As Joy speaks, Isaac, a vigorous youth, appears from the right. When he reaches Abraham, the latter embraces him and gives him the torch.)

Isaac: I will carry on the Light and those who come after me will walk in its path forever.

(Isaac remains standing in his place, the torch in his hand, while Abraham and his group pass to the left of the stage where they remain during the rest of the pageant.)

Wisdom In darkest slavery burns the Light of Truth:
 For Israel turns his face from brutish gods
 And like his father Abraham sets forth
 To seek and serve the ever-living God.

Joy (*from her place beside Wisdom, pointing to right*)—

When as a wall the sea
 In heaps uplifted lay,
 A new song unto Thee
 Sang the redeemed that day.
 Thou didst in his conceit
 O'erwhelm the Egyptians' feet,
 While Israel's footsteps fleet,
 How beautiful were they!*

* Jehudah Halevi.

INTERLUDE

THE DANCE BY THE SEA

From the left comes Miriam leading her Maidens in triumphant dance. They are clothed in garments of white and gold, Miriam leading them, dressed in scarlet. The rest carry cymbals, but Miriam takes the flaming torch from Isaac and holds it aloft as she dances.

Wisdom: The light of freedom flames in victory's song.

(As the Maidens begin their dance, enter from L. Moses and Aaron, white-robed, leading their group of men, women and children, slaves out of Egypt. During intervals of the dance they join in the swelling chorus, sung or chanted.)

Miriam I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously:
 The horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea.
 The Lord is my strength and song,
 And He is become my salvation:
 This is my God and I will praise Him;
 My father's God and I will exalt Him.

Chorus The Lord is my strength and song,
 And He is become my salvation.

Moses (*stepping from his place at foot of throne*)—

 The Lord is a man of war:
 The Lord is His name;
 Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath He cast
 into the sea:

And his chosen captains are sunk in the Red
Sea.

The deeps cover them:

They went down in the depths like a stone.

Chorus

Who is like Thee, O Lord, among the gods?

Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness,

Fearful in praises, doing wonders!

EPISODE II

THE LIGHT OF FREEDOM

The dance over, Miriam and her Maidens join the group of Hebrews which Aaron leads a little to the right. Moses remains standing at the foot of throne. Joy has descended, carrying in her arms the Tablets of the Law; these she places in his hands, also the torch taken from Miriam.

Wisdom These slaves who found their freedom are not
 free,
 Until they forge themselves the lasting yoke
 Of God's own Law which brings man liberty.

Joy (*to Moses*): Thus saith the Lord unto Israel: Ye shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God hath commanded you, that ye may live and that it may be well with you and that ye may prolong your days in the land which the Lord your God giveth you forever.

(Moses takes the Tablets and walks to the midst of the Israelites who have come out of Egypt.)

Moses: Thus saith the Lord: Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the judgments which I speak into your ears this day that ye may learn them and observe to do them.
(This episode may be played almost entirely in pantomime, the Commandments being omitted.) I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

Israelites: All that the Lord hath laid upon us will we do.

Moses: Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor the likeness of any form that is in heaven above, or that

is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

Israelites: All that the Lord hath laid upon us will we do.

Moses: Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.

Israelites: All that the Lord hath laid upon us will we do.

Moses: Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work: but the seventh day is a sabbath unto the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it.

Israelites: All that the Lord hath laid upon us will we do.

Moses: Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

Israelites: All that the Lord hath laid upon us will we do.

Moses: Thou shalt do no murder.

Israelites: All that the Lord hath laid upon us will we do.

Moses: Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Israelites: All that the Lord hath laid upon us will we do.

Moses: Thou shalt not steal.

Israelites: All that the Lord hath laid upon us will we do.

Moses: Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Israelites: All that the Lord hath laid upon us will we do.

Moses: Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

Israelites: All that the Lord hath laid upon us will we do.

Moses: And what surety will ye give to do all that ye have promised?

(The Israelites, coming forward, offer as surety their jewels brought out of Egypt; some of the younger men pledge the weapons they carry. Moses shakes his head. Then a woman brings forward her child and he nods, well pleased. Aaron lifts the child before the people as an offering.)

Moses: If the little children of Israel pledge themselves to do the words of the Lord, then the commandments of the Lord are indeed safe forever.

Little Children (*clustering about Aaron*): All that the Lord hath laid upon us will we do.

Moses: Then will the light of the Torch burn forever. (*He blesses them; then he turns to Joshua, a tall man in glittering armor, and hands him the Light.*) The Light will pass from father to child, from master to pupil. Take thou, O my Joshua, the Light which will pass from hand to hand even forever.

(The group of Israelites led by Moses pass over to the first group at right of stage. Joshua remains a little distance from throne, holding the Light.)

EPISODE III

THE FLICKERING FLAME

Wisdom—

The Tent of Meeting in the Wilderness
Has grown to marble 'neath the reverent hands
Of Solomon on his far-reaching throne;
King after king in haughty majesty
Brings offerings to the shrine where glows my Light,
And white-robed priests are servants of the flame.
My Temple stands in high Jerusalem!
But some there are who worship with their lips,
Whose hearts have wandered seeking alien gods,
Forgetting Him who led them through the sea
To teeming lands of honey and of milk. . . .
These love the Darkness rather than the Light!
But midst the mockery of the Law He gave,
The dark of error and the maze of sin,
My faithful servants feed the flickering Flame.

Grief (*pointing toward left*): O Man of Sorrows, stricken with grief and afflicted, cry out against those who walk not in His ways, who have turned from the Light and stumble in the Darkness.

(*Jeremiah, dressed in mean, dark garments, enters, leaning upon the arm of Baruch, a slender youth, dressed in white, the scribe's tablets in his hands, quills thrust through his girdle. Enter with great pomp King Jehoiakim and his court, priests, people of Jerusalem. They form a group apart. Jeremiah takes a scroll from his girdle, bids Baruch wait for him, approaches King.*)

Jeremiah: Thus saith the Lord to me, Jeremiah, His servant:
Go unto the King Jehoiakim and place before him the

words I have spoken unto thee, that he may know the will of the Lord.

Jehoiakim (*reading scroll scornfully*): Thus saith the Lord, If ye will not hearken to Me, to walk in My law, which I have put before you, to hearken to the words of My servants the prophets, then will I make this house like Shiloh, and will make Jerusalem a curse to all the nations of the earth.

Priests (*crying out angrily*): He would destroy the Temple ——

People of Jerusalem: He hath prophesied evil against Jerusalem ——

Jehoiakim (*tearing the scroll to bits*): Thus do I destroy the lying words of false prophets. (*He scatters the paper bits upon the ground.*)

Jeremiah (*thunderously*): Thus will the Lord do with thee and with thy house and with all the inhabitants of Jerusalem who know not His commandments and seek not to walk in His ways!

People of Jerusalem: Slay him—he hath spoken evil of the king ——

Priests: He would destroy Jerusalem—slay him ——

Jehoiakim: Slay him not, for he is a mad prophet and his words are full of emptiness.

(*Jeremiah walks dejectedly back to Baruch. King and court remain at further end of stage. Jeremiah with a gesture commands Baruch to sit at his feet and write from his dictation. Baruch takes out his writing material and waits his words, as Jeremiah stands beside him holding the Torch.*)

Jeremiah: Though the King of Judah hath cut into pieces and thrown into the flames the rolls on which I have writ the words of the Lord, write thou another roll, Baruch, my son, and still another, of the words the Lord hath

given me to speak, that the words of the Lord may not depart from the midst of Israel. (*Jeremiah looks weeping toward the people of Jerusalem, some exchanging cups of wine, several maidens dancing in thoughtless merriment.*) Thus saith the Lord (*dictating*) Behold, the days come that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with the fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, saith the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make the house of Israel after those days: I will write my law in their hearts and I will be their God and they shall be my people.

(*Baruch rises, holds aloft the scroll he has written, then rolling it and placing it in his girdle. He takes Jeremiah's arm and affectionately leads him toward the group of the people of Jerusalem. Jeremiah seeks their midst, while Baruch stands on the outskirts of the group holding the Torch Jeremiah has given him.*)

Wisdom (to Grief)—

How often, daughter, has sad Israel drained
Your urn of exile, wandering and of tears,
And cried aloud in distant Babylon!

People of Jerusalem (standing in their places)—

By the rivers of Babylon,
There we sat down, yea, we wept,
When we remembered Zion.
Upon the willows in the midst thereof
We hanged up our harps.
For there they that led us captive required of us songs,
And they that wasted us required of us mirth:
"Sing us one of the songs of Zion."
How shall we sing the Lord's song
In a strange land?

Single Voice (*as others die away*)—

If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,
Let my right hand forget her cunning;
Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth,
If I remember thee not;
If I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.

People of Jerusalem

By the rivers of Babylon,
There we sat down, yea, we wept,
When we remembered Zion.

EPISODE IV

THE RESCUED FLAME*

Joy (*pointing to right*)—

But through their darkness pierced a radiant star,
The Light which sang "Return—return—return—"
And back they journeyed to Jerusalem.

Wisdom

Where many faithfully served my holy Light,
Until one sought to quench the living flame;
Antiochus, who drenched my shrine with blood.

Joy

But lo, deliverance! The sacred oil
Flamed forth to shed new glory on the earth.

(Joy points to right, where enter, singing and rejoicing, a group of maidens bearing garlands and dancing before the victorious army of the Maccabees, Judas at their head. Women and children bearing palms follow. Joy descends the stairs, takes the Torch from the hand of Baruch, who rejoins his group, and stands waiting to greet Judas and the Maccabees at the foot of the stairs. She places the Torch in Judas' hands.)

Joy

Hail to thee, O Deliverer of the Light,
Judas the Maccabee!

(Cries from the group: Hail, Judas! Hail to the Maccabees!)

* If this episode is omitted, retain the above speech of "Joy", followed by speech of "Grief", which begins Episode V.

Priest (*stepping forward*): Hail, thou who hast saved Israel from the hand of the oppressor and Jerusalem out of the hand of them that mocked her.

An Old Man: Now lead us thy people into the Temple that we may give thanks to the God of our fathers and show honor unto His name.

Another Priest: Alas, we cannot light the Menorah, for the Syrians have wantonly polluted our holy oil.

Voices from Crowd: No holy oil! The lamps remain unlit!

Little Child (*stepping forward*): Lord Judas, I found this flask of oil while straying in the Temple. See, it is still sealed ——

A Priest: —— and unpolluted by the heathen ——

Another Priest: We will light the Menorah ——

Judas (*placing the Torch in the child's hand*): And thou wilt lead us into the Temple and bear our Torch, for it is through thee that our Menorah is lighted. Be thou faithful through the ages that the Light of Israel will stream forth, even to the uttermost ends of the earth.

(*Singing and rejoicing, they pass to the other groups, the child leading them and remaining a little on the outskirts nearer the throne, at the foot of which stands Joy. Grief comes down the stairs and joins her.*)

EPISODE V

FLAME FROM THE ASHES

Grief (*pointing to group advancing led by victorious Romans under Titus and Vespasian, followed at distance by Jews, mourning and wailing, the last of the procession carrying a covered bier*)—

O sacred Light, served by the Maccabees,
Now well-nigh quenched by Israel's blood and tears!
The iron heel of Rome treads on the Torch;
The iron hand of Rome drags in the mire
The priestly vestments and the bowls of gold;
The iron heart of Rome exults in pride,
As Titus' legions mount the Temple walls
And bring the Glory of the World to dust.

Joy (*from her place*)—

Yet from the ashes living beacons burn
To bless the world with healing and with light!

Grief

O mourning Israel, raise your voice and weep,
Don sackcloth and cast ashes on your head;
Quenched is the Light of your Jerusalem!

Joy: Nay, for the Torch will burn with widening flame.

(*The Romans, Vespasian prominent by his robes, armor, etc., reach the foot of the throne. As soon as they have reached their places, the group of wailing Jews approach, carrying the bier. Several Roman soldiers seek to stop them with uplifted spears.*)

Centurion: Ye may not pass. No man may leave the city.

Young Jew: But we go to bury our master, Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai.

Centurion: Pass on. (*He and his men lower their spears, the youths proceeding to Vespasian, where they lower the coffin and assist Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai to step forth.*)

Rabbi (*saluting Vespasian*): Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, who hath deigned to allow a mortal to share thy splendor.

Vespasian: What meanest thou?

Rabbi: With these words, O my Lord Vespasian, the Jew is accustomed to greet those whom the Lord our God hath chosen to wear the imperial crown.

Vespasian (*startled*): The imperial crown! I am a Roman general—not an emperor!

Rabbi: I see the imperial crown about thy brow—O my emperor! (*He points to a runner approaching the group, clad in the liveries of the Roman court. The runner kneels before Vespasian and presents a scroll.*)

Vespasian (*after reading the scroll and speaking in an awed voice*): The Senate proclaims me Emperor of Rome.

(*Romans salute him, crying out, “All hail the Emperor!” One of the soldiers pulls off Vespasian’s golden chain and binds it about his head in semblance of a crown.*)

Vespasian (*graciously to Rabbi*): And thou, O rabbi, who hast been the first to acknowledge me—what can I give thee in reward?

Rabbi: Nothing for myself, O my master—but I would plead for my people.

Vespasian: Plead not for Jerusalem! It will be razed to the ground and my slaves will plough deep furrows over Mount Zion.

Rabbi: This is all I ask: Quench not the Light entirely lest the whole world perish in darkness.

Vespasian: Old man, I have no time for thy riddles.

Rabbi: Grant that these few faithful pupils who are with me be given safe conduct to Jabneh where I will found a school. There will we study the Torch and keep alive the Flame.

Vespasian: Thy wish is granted—go in peace.

(Vespasian leads his soldiers to join the former groups. Joy takes the Torch from the Maccabean child, who rejoins his group, and brings it to Rabbi Yochanan.)

Joy: Cherish the Light to shine throughout the world.

(Rabbi Yochanan leads his pupils to join their group and they sit together as he expounds the Law one of them has carried. One of the pupils stands at a little distance, nearer the stairs, the Torch in his hand.)

INTERLUDE—THE LIGHT IN THE RUINS

Wisdom (*after Joy and Grief take their places beside her as before*)—

The years rolled on, and from the tiny spark
At Jabneh cherished grew a mighty Flame;
From Israel's schools the rabbis brought the Light
To distant Babylon, where sages sat
Together in long converse o'er the Law,
Sweeter than honey, yea, than honeycomb:
Until one bore the Torch to sunny Spain.

Joy (*descending the stairs and pointing toward Jehudah Halevi, dressed in rich garments, who enters, followed by a young page, carrying his harp*)—

O golden days of learning and of peace,
In which Halevi dreamed—and sang his dreams!

(*Joy takes Torch from the pupil of the preceding episode, and, returning, places it in Jehudah's hand.*)

Joy

Our rabbis bore the Flame through darkest night,
And in their grief dreamed of Jerusalem;
But though thy paths were pleasantness and peace,
Thy faithful, yearning heart could not forget
The ruined splendors of Jerusalem.

Jehudah Halevi (*takes the harp from his little page and gives him the Torch*): My heart is in the east—I must return. (*Mounting several steps, he turns toward the right, touching his harp as he recites*):

O City of the World,
With sacred splendor blest,
My spirit yearns for thee
From out the far-off West.

A stream of love wells forth
When I recall thy day,
Now is thy Temple waste,
Thy glory passed away.

Had I an eagle's wings,
Straight would I fly to thee,
Moisten thy holy dust
With wet cheeks streaming free.

Oh, how I long for thee!
Although thy King has gone.
Although where balm once flowed
The serpent dwells alone.

Could I but kiss thy dust,
So would I fain expire,
As sweet as honey then
My longing, my desire.*

(Repeating the first stanza, Jehudah Halevi and the page pass off to join the others, the latter remaining nearer the stairs and holding the Torch. Joy takes her place beside Wisdom.)

* Jehudah Halevi.

EPISODE VI

THE LIGHT OF EXILE

Grief

O golden days of Spain too quickly fled!
A dreadful Flame burned in thy pleasant land,
The fires of persecution which consumed
Our holy ones, who singing went to God.

(Descends steps and points to group of Spanish exiles who approach, prominent among them an old rabbi carrying a Sefer Torah, a little child leading him, for he is blind).

Grief (*weeping*): What home hath Israel but the peaceful grave!

Joy (*coming down to her*)—

Man shall not quench the Light which is of God.
See how the aged rabbi proudly bears
His dearest treasure from the land of Spain—
Not gold or jewels to buy him house or bread,
Only the Torah which his fathers knew.

Wisdom (*from her place as the procession stops before the throne*)—

An age-worn wanderer, pale with thought and tears,*
With heart heroic and prophetic look,
Comes clasping to his breast the Sacred Book—
The amulet of Israel through the years!

“Behold!” he says, “through ages dark with fears,
Through travail and through miseries that shock
The soul of Judah, this he ne’er forsook,
It is his Book—therein his God appears.

* Felix Gerson.

His Book!—more glorious with supernal light
Than all the beacons reared by mortal hands,
Since time first lisped its anguish in the night.

His Book! That gave a God to all the lands,
Whose pages shall through Israel reveal
The wondrous promise grief could not conceal.

*(The procession of Spanish exiles moves on. The old
rabbi stumbles, but the child raises him, and, lifting the Sefer
Torah in his arms with difficulty, presses on.)*

Wisdom: The child shall bear the Hope of Israel.

Grief: O Spain, that wantonly cast out the Light!

Joy

Yet even now when Spain would quench the Light,
Across the Sea of Darkness plough three ships,
Three ships Columbus launched with Jewish gold.

(To Spanish exiles)

A blessed beacon rises in the West:
Columbus finds a land where ye shall dwell
And know true liberty and lasting peace.

*(The Spanish exiles, the rabbi at their head, pass to
further end of stage.)*

EPISODE VII

THE LIGHT TO BE

To solemn music a tall figure enters, muffled in a gray drapery. It stands in the center of the stage. Joy and Grief come slowly down to it, Joy carrying the Torch she has taken from the page, who now joins the Spanish group. They remove the draperies, revealing a young woman dressed as America.

America (*taking the Torch from Joy and holding it on high*):

I lift my Lamp beside the golden door.*

(*Joy and Grief retire to their places. America continues*):

A slave to error, Abram wandered far
That he in Freedom might uphold the Light;
From Egypt's slavery, Israel's sons went forth
To follow Freedom as their morning star;
And, like a flame the Maccabees arose,
Bringing their dear-bought freedom to the world.
But, free in soul, the Jew hath ever been
A bondman and a wanderer o'er the earth:
Egypt oppressed and Syria crushed his soul,
And Rome o'erwhelmed him, but it could not slay;
E'en golden Spain sent forth her exile band,
And Russia wrote upon the blood-stained snow:
Pass on, O Jew, there is no refuge here!
But I, America, whose builders came
Seeking the old soul-freedom of the Jew,
Writing their laws from Israel's holy Book,
I, who am Freedom, shed my healing light
Across the wretched darkness of the world;
I call the Jew, the ageless wanderer home.

* Emma Lazarus.

(There enters slowly a group of refugees who might have come from Spain in 1492, broken, weary, despairing, of every age, women with children in their arms, young men, wounded in the defense of countries which have since cast them out, half-grown children—all led by an old, old man, holding a Torah in his arms and supported by a little boy. They pause beside America. They are in the costumes of various European immigrants, the old man in Polish gabardine, skull-cap and Tallith, the little child in a ragged coat, women in shawls.)

Old Man: We have grown weary in our search for truth.

America: Bide here and serve the Living Light in Peace.

Old Man: After long wandering peace is good at last.

Wisdom *(crying out from her place)*—

There is no peace for keepers of the Light:
While darkness lingers they must suffer still.

(Pointing)

Isaiah—Dreamer of the Light to Be,
Who visioned Israel, wandering o'er the earth,
Suffering the stripes that heal and cleanse the world!

An Old Man *(as Isaiah enters, a beautiful grave figure such as Sargent drew)*—

He was despised and forsaken of men,
A man of pains and acquainted with disease,
And as one from whom men hide their face:

(Bowing before Isaiah)

Ours were the stripes that heal and cleanse the world,
Isaiah—Dreamer of the Light to Be.

Isaiah (*as one who dreams*)—

And it shall come to pass in the end of days
That the mountain of the Lord's house shall be estab-
lished as the top of the mountains,
And shall be exalted above the hills;
And all the nations shall flow unto it.
And many peoples shall go and say:
“Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
To the house of the God of Jacob;
And He will teach us of His ways,
And we will walk in His paths.”
For out of Zion shall go forth the Law,

(Takes Torah from Old Man)

And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem,
And He shall judge between the nations,
And shall decide for many peoples;
And they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
And their spears into pruning hooks;
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
Neither shall they learn war any more.

Exiles (*repeating prayerfully*)—

Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
Neither shall they learn war any more.

Old Man

The people that walked in darkness
Have seen a great Light.

Isaiah (*commandingly*)—

Yet while the darkness lingers on the earth,
The Servant of the Light must know no peace.
Toil on, O Seed of Jacob, seek no rest,
Until the world is one great House of Prayer.

*(The groups who have passed before speak in their turn,
either standing in their places or after they have taken their*

position for the processional; the figures of the Interludes precede their groups.)

Abraham (*and his group*)—

I sought the Light—and passed it to my son.

Moses (*and his group*)—

The Law of God flashed forth from Sinai's height;
The spark we cherished through our desert dream.

Jeremiah (*and his group*)—

We mocked the Light and walked not in its way;
But wept 'neath willows' shade in Babylon.

Isaiah (*from his place*)—

Then weep no more—Light shines o'er land and sea—
Now learn His comfort in Jerusalem!

Judas Maccabee: We shed our blood and carried on the
Light.

Exiles (*from their place*): And we died also that the Light
might live.

Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai (*and his group*): We 'mid the
ruins cherished Israel's Law.

Spanish Rabbi (*following with his group*): 'Twas the one
treasure that we bore from Spain.

Isaiah (*taking Torch from America and placing it in the
hands of Old Man*)—

The people without vision surely die:
Guard thou the Light by which the Nations live.

Old Man (*taking Torch*)—

Like Abraham I served the sacred flame;
And like him I am blessed in my seed;

(Gives Torch to child beside him)

O son, thou art the Hope of the whole world,
Bear thou the Torch and bless the earth with Light!

Child (*simply*): I am a Jew. I carry on the Light!

(*The Exiles, led by America, Isaiah, Old Man and Child, carrying the Torch, take their places at the beginning of the processional. Here the pageant proper ends; but, if desired, any appropriate epilogue written for the occasion may be recited by the little Child of the last episode, as in the case of the historic celebration at the twenty-fifth anniversary of Isaiah Temple, Chicago. Then Wisdom, with Joy and Grief attending her, takes her place at the head of the processional, and holding the little Child bearing the Torch by the hand, leads the other characters from the scene.*)

PLATES FOR COSTUMES

The five costume plates illustrate the various methods by which all the costumes necessary for the Biblical plays in this volume may be constructed by the producer and children themselves. In every case the simple tunic forms the basis of the costume.

PLATE I

Plate I

The figure to the right wears the simple, straight tunic reaching to the knee, which may be worn by boys representing shepherds, slaves, peasants or servants; girls taking male parts may wear the same costume. This tunic is best made of cambric or some heavier material, and should vary in color according to the wearer—white for the shepherd, dark for the slave, etc.

The figure to the left has the same tunic adapted for a Maccabean captain. The simple head-dress and sandals of the shepherd are replaced by the boots and helmet of the warrior; over the tunic are fastened the breast-plate and cape, which may be fashioned of silver paper over pasteboard.

The different types of weapons and utensils shown at the sides may be made by the actors.

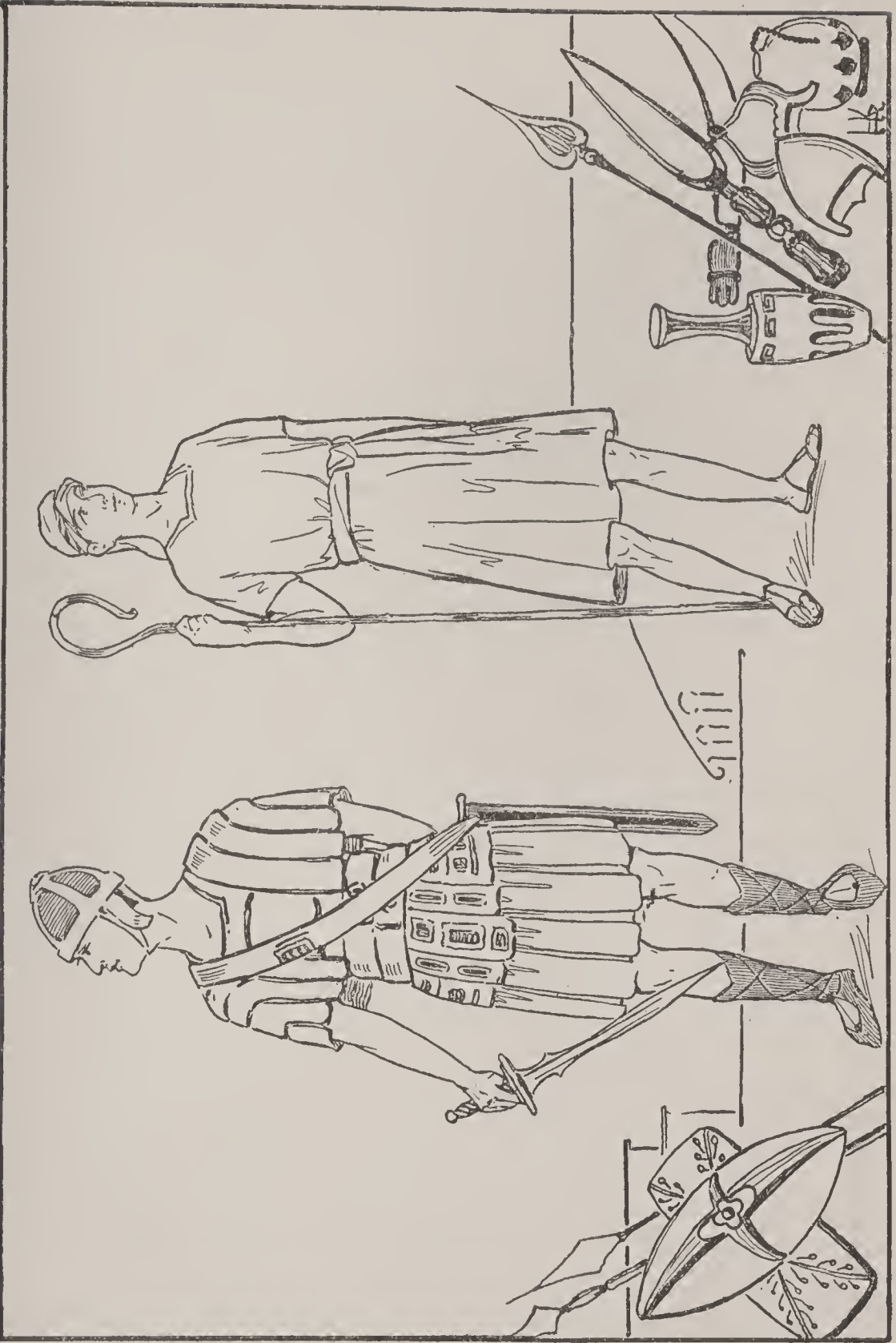


PLATE II

Plate II

The figure to the right shows how the basic tunic (Plate I), trimmed and draped, forms the costume of a courtier; distinctive features are the elaborate head-dress, jewels, fringed girdle and high-laced sandals. With more elaborate mantle and accessories, this forms the royal costume, as shown on Plate V.

The costume to the left shows another adaptation of the tunic; of ankle length, with broad girdle and long flowing sleeves, it may be used for a priest, scribe, sage or elder. The high-priest's breastplate and hat, the ink-horn and scroll indicate the appropriate characters. One form of this costume is worn by Mordecai, on Plate V.

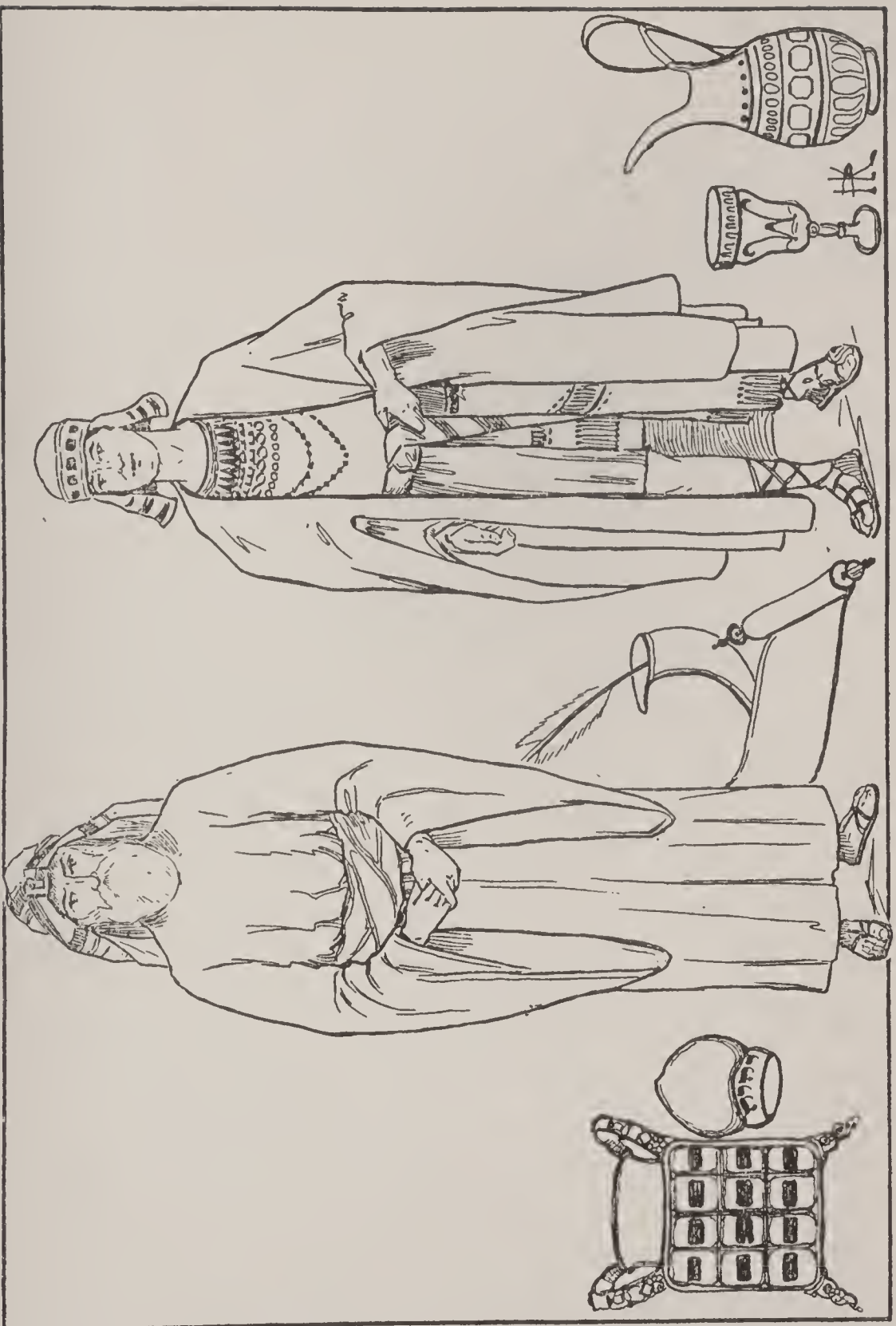


PLATE III

Plate III

The figure on the left wears the tunic which forms the basis of all the women's costumes. It may be used for a peasant or slave girl, the hair uncovered or bound with a simple head-band. This costume, when elaborately trimmed, with the addition of jewelry, veils, etc., forms the dress of the dancing girls at the right. The handmill, basket and vases are generally carried by slaves or peasants.

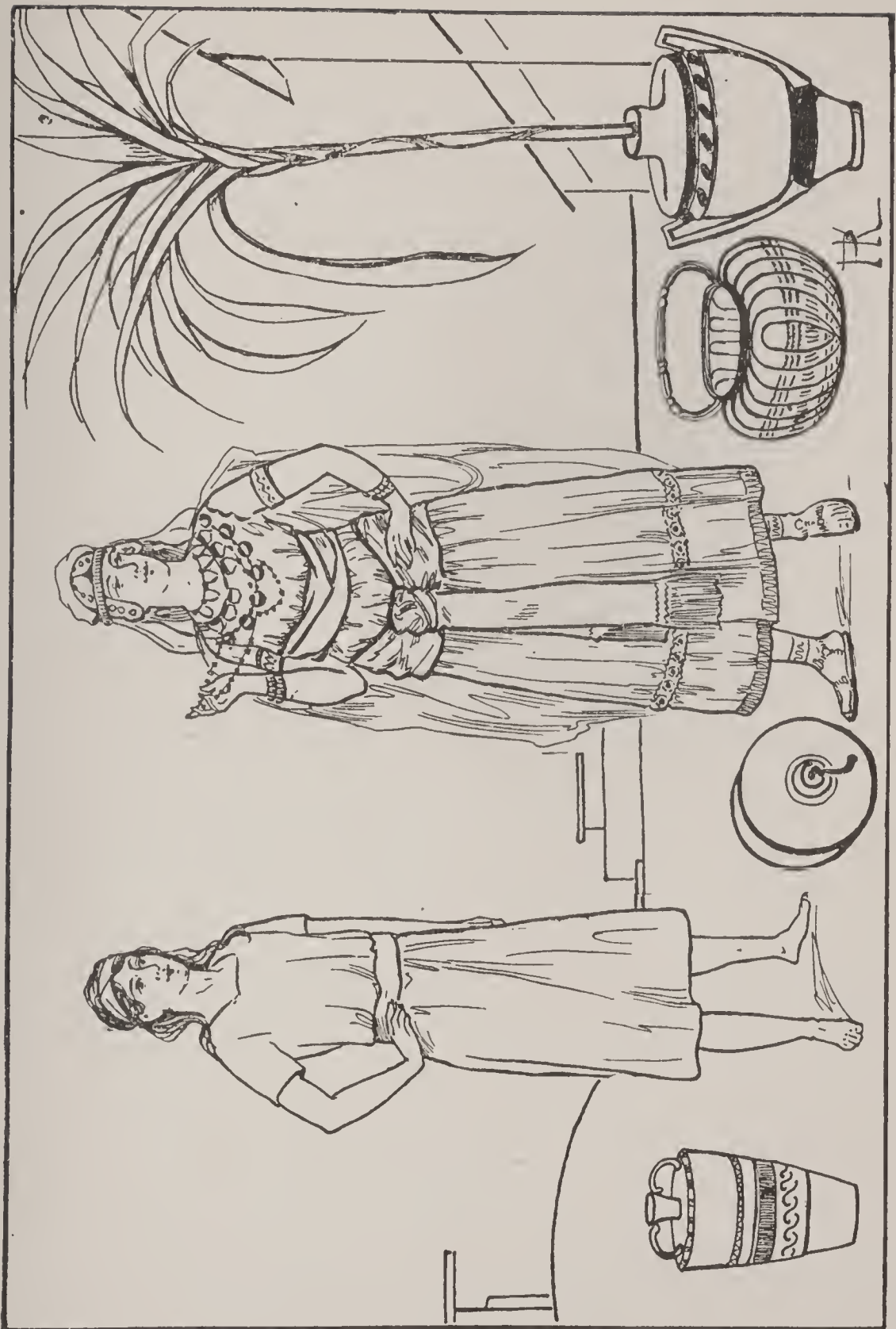


PLATE IV

Plate IV

The figure on the left shows the tunic of ankle length and with flowing sleeves, which is suitable for a handmaiden or woman of the people. When worn with an outer robe, more elaborate head-dress and jewelry, as on the right, it becomes the costume of a court lady or princess. The costume of Esther, shown on Plate V, is nothing more than the costume of the court lady made of richer material and worn with an elaborate crown. The jewelry can be made of cardboard covered with gold or silver paper, with bits of bright-colored paper or beads to represent jewels.

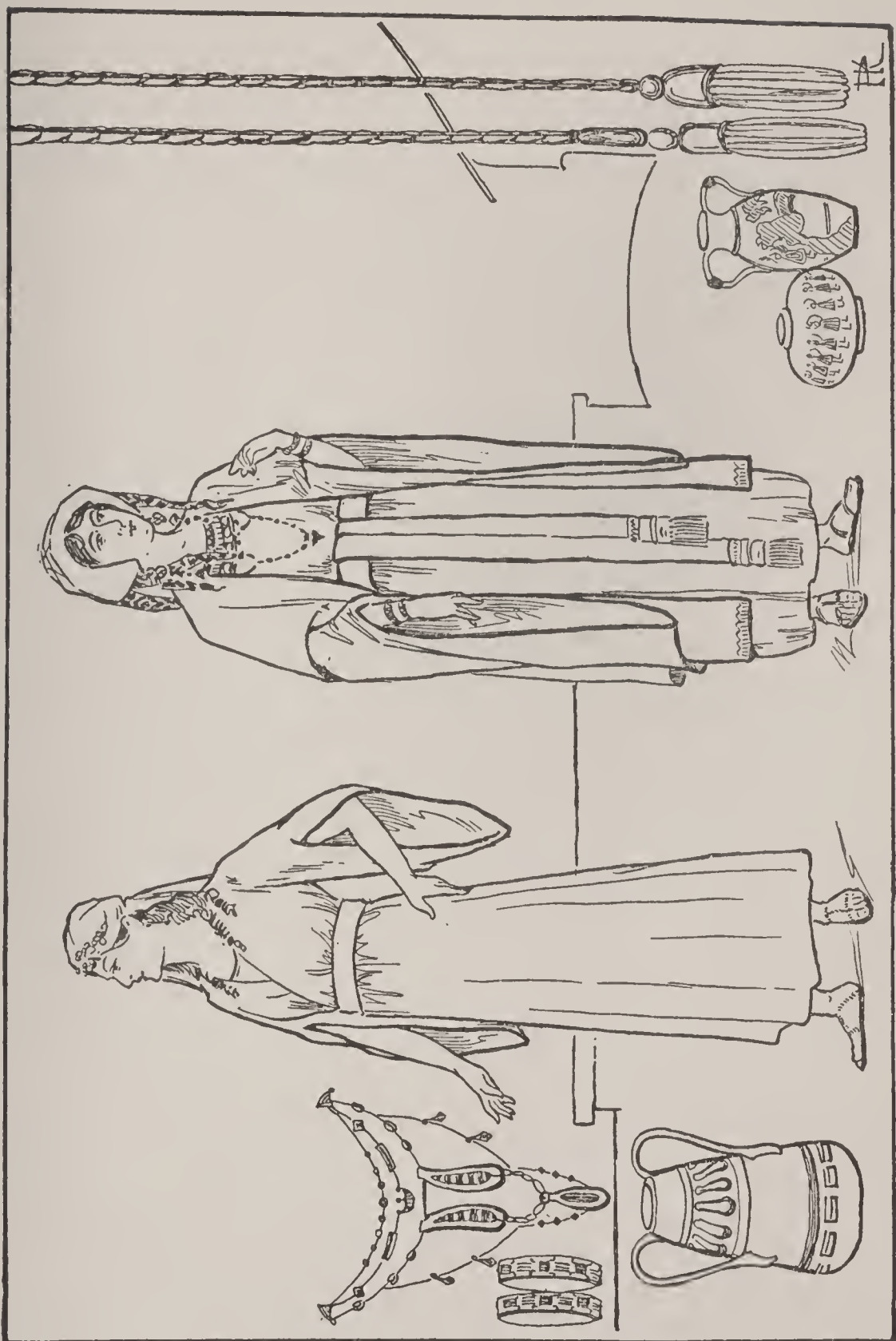


PLATE V

Plate V

This shows the well-known scene from the Purim story, where Ahasuerus bestows his signet ring upon Mordecai; three types of costumes are presented—king, queen and sage.

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It is hoped that this book will cover the entire field for any school for a period of three years. In order to supplement this material, as well as to make accessible the large number of references, the author gives below the addresses of the various organizations whose publications have been referred to, as well as books which will supplement this work, and which should be available in every religious school.

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DEPARTMENT OF SYNAGOG AND SCHOOL EXTENSION, *Merchants Bldg.*, Cincinnati, O.

BLOCH PUBLISHING CO., *26 E. 22d St.*, New York, N. Y.

BUREAU OF JEWISH EDUCATION (Especially for their Jewish Festival Books), *140 Fifth Ave.*, New York, N. Y.

JEWISH PUBLICATION SOCIETY, *Broad St. & Girard Ave.*, Philadelphia, Pa.

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